DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 335 743 EA 023 206

AUTHOR Brown, Daniel J.
TITLE Decentralization and School-Based Management.
REPORT NO ISBN-1-85000-600-8
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 290p.
AVAILABLE FROM Falmer Press, 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007 ($62.00; paperback--ISBN-1-85000-601-6).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC12 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Organization; *Decentralization; Elementary Secondary Education; Institutional Autonomy; Organizational Change; *School Based Management; School Organization

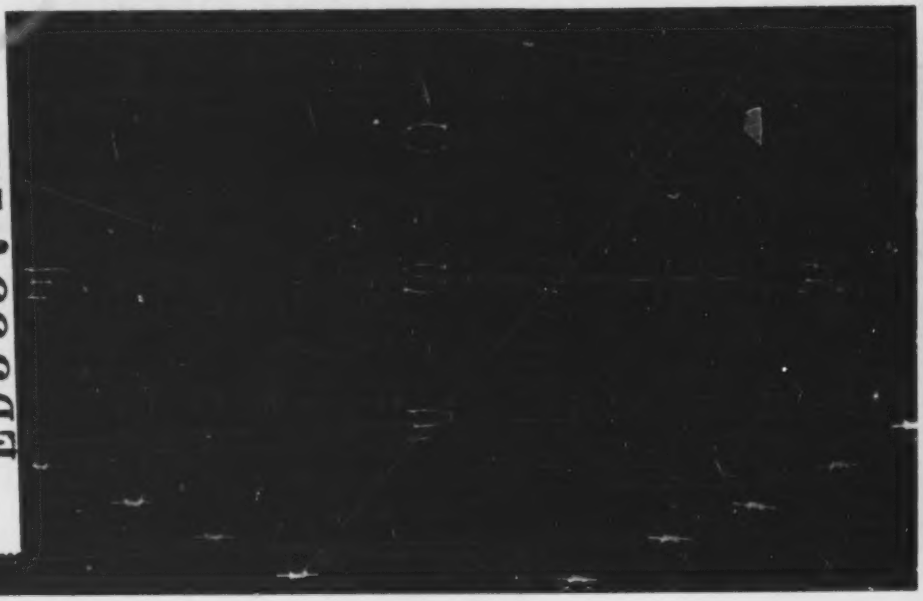
ABSTRACT

The general aim of this book is to provide a focussed discussion on decentralization and school-based management. In part 1, chapter 1, some problems, anticipations, and a recommendation concerning decentralization are presented. In part 2, chapters 2 through 6 review literature about the structural view of organizations, rationality and organizations, and political and organizational decentralization in education as well as a conceptual synthesis of and key questions about decentralization. Chapter 7 of part 3 delineates the methods used in a study about decentralization conducted for this book. The results of that study are analyzed in part 4, chapters 8 through 12, and used to answer questions about the structure of school-based management, how much flexibility of decision-making it provides, its system of accountability, its effect on productivity, and the adoption process. Conclusions drawn from the study are provided in part 5, chapters 13 through 15. An index is provided. (113 references) (EJS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

DECENTRALIZATION AND

ED335743



SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E. Striisand

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA 023 206

The Falmer Press

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DECENTRALIZATION AND SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

There is a sustained interest in the United States and Canada in decentralization as a means of school reform. How much and what to decentralize are abiding concerns for school districts. Many ideas have been tried, such as voucher plans, magnet schools, zero-base budgeting and school consultative committees. However, the mechanism of school-based management has remained prominent among reform possibilities.

Dan Brown's important volume provides a lucid discussion on decentralization and school-based management which includes the background ideas of decentralization. The perspective taken is largely one from organizational theory. It is grounded in research undertaken in the leading district in North America (among others) which has adopted school-based management. Unlike other sources, the volume does not 'take a position' on decentralization. Rather, it offers an impartial analysis of how school-based management works and what its effects are. Brown presents both theoretically interpreted and research-based views of decentralization and school-based management, exploring their implications for theory and policy.

Jacket design by Caroline Archer

3

ISBN 1 85000 600 8

To Marnie, Trevor, and Leanne Brown

Decentralization and School-based Management

by
Daniel J. Brown

The Falmer Press
(A member of the Taylor & Francis Group)
London • New York • Philadelphia

5

UK The Falmer Press, Falmer House, Barcombe, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 5DL

USA The Falmer Press, Taylor & Francis Inc., 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007

© Daniel J. Brown 1990

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission in writing from the Publisher.

First published 1990

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Brown, Daniel J.
Decentralization and school-based management.
1. Schools. Management
I. Title
371.2
ISBN 1-85000-600-8
ISBN 1-85000-601-6 (pbk.)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Brown, Daniel J., 1941–
Decentralization and school-based management / by Daniel J. Brown.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN 1-85000-600-8 — ISBN 1-85000-601-6 (pbk.)
1. Schools—Decentralization. 2. School management and organization. 3. Educational accountability. I. Title.
LB2862.B76 1990
379.1'54—dc20 89-28473
CIP

Jacket design by Caroline Archer

Typeset in 11/13 Bembo by
Imago Publishing Ltd, Thame, Oxon

The paper used in this publication is 'acid free' and conforms to the American National Standards Institute requirements in this respect.

Printed in Great Britain by Taylor & Francis (Printers) Ltd, Basingstoke

Contents

Preface		*vii*
Part I	**INTRODUCTION**	
Chapter 1	Some Problems, a Recommendation and Anticipations	3
Part II	**A LOOK AT THE LITERATURE**	
Chapter 2	The Structural View of Organizations	25
Chapter 3	Rationality and Organizations	50
Chapter 4	Political Decentralization in Education	60
Chapter 5	Organizational Decentralization in Education	73
Chapter 6	Conceptual Synthesis and Key Questions	100
PART III	**METHODS OF RESEARCH**	
Chapter 7	How the Study was Conducted	111
PART IV	**RESULTS**	
Chapter 8	What is the Structure of School-based Management?	129
Chapter 9	Does School-based Management Provide Flexibility of Decision-making	144
Chapter 10	Does School-based Management Provide a System of Accountability?	159
Chapter 11	Does School-based Management Result in an Increase in Productivity	180
Chapter 12	How Does the Change to School-based Management Progress?	200

PART V CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 13 Discussions and Reflections on the Structure of Decentralization 221

Chapter 14 Discussions and Reflections on the Outcomes of Decentralization 234

Chapter 15 Some General Thoughts on Decentralization 256

Bibliography 267

Index 276

Preface

There is a sustained interest in the United States and Canada in decentralization as a means of school district and school reform. How much and what to decentralize are abiding concerns for school districts. Many ideas have been tried, such as voucher plans, magnet schools, zero-base budgeting and school consultative committees. However, the mechanism of school-based management has remained prominent among the reform possibilities. The concept has been tried in Florida, California, Minnesota and Washington: many groups have advocated variations on the idea in other states. Yet, the most advanced plan is to be found in Canada with a sophisticated form of decentralization working in Edmonton, Alberta. But very little has been written about the Edmonton experience or others like it.

What is school-based management? As a manifestation of decentralization, it means simply that schools within a district are allotted money to purchase supplies, equipment, personnel, utilities, maintenance, and perhaps other services according to their own assessment of what is appropriate. Schools' authority to make decisions such as these is in contrast to standard practices in most districts, which require that such decisions be made at the central office. A change to school-based management implies greater flexibility of decision-making, changes in role accountability (particularly for the principal) and the potential enhancement of school productivity.

Objectives of This Inquiry

The general aim of the book is to provide a focussed discussion on decentralization and school-based management which is unique in a number of respects. First, the book presents the background ideas to

decentralization, the theoretical principles on which it can be based. No other easily-available source has shown where the ideas come from or how they fit with the more general concept of organizational structure. This work does not offer an historical account of the rise of centralization and the counter-trend of decentralization of school districts across various continents. Such a study deserves its own volume. Rather, the perspective taken is largely one from organizational theory, which addresses the structure and processes of districts and schools.

Second, it is grounded in research on school-based management undertaken in Edmonton, in Langley (a Vancouver suburb), and to a lesser extent in Cleveland and two rural districts in British Columbia. These districts represent a selected group which includes the leader in decentralization. They also provide a lens through which school-based management may be comprehended and from which implications may be drawn. While there is a popular literature on the topic, there are no sources, apart from older dissertations, which use research results to draw important conclusions. This research was based upon 114 interviews backed up by documents and quantitative data. It was funded partially by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Third, the volume does not 'take a position' on decentralization as a means to effect change, as is done by some authors. Rather, it attempts to produce an impartial analysis of how school-based management works and what its effects are. By setting aside advocacy, its focus is on the facts perceived to be pertinent to this version of decentralization. It is important that educators and policy-makers judge what the merits and demerits of decentralization are for themselves.

Fourth, in offering both theoretically interpreted and research-based views of decentralization and school-based management, it is intended to explore some of their implications for theory and practice. Simply, the book discusses decentralization, how it is conceived, how it works, what its outcomes are and how it is attained.

The Prospective Reader

This book should be of interest to a reader who is a professional educator or policy-maker. He/she will probably want to gain an understanding of decentralization based on the literature and the first-hand knowledge of others who have had the experience of school-based management. He/she may want the opportunity to com-

prehend where the idea comes from, what problems it is intended to solve, and what effects, positive and negative, might be expected if a local district was to adopt decentralization to some degree. More particularly, one set of prospective readers includes those in academic pursuits such as graduate students of education, especially those of educational administration and policy. It also includes professors of education who could use the volume as a supplementary textbook in courses which address educational administration, policy, organizations, finance, leadership, change and personnel roles. Another set of prospective readers encompasses those with direct responsibilities for the delivery of educational services. They include school board members, senior administrators (particularly superintendents), principals and teachers who have an interest in educational administration.

How to Start This Book

If you are a reader who would like to know about the general outcomes of this study, then the conclusions in point form (chapter 15) would be a starting point. These outcomes are presented in paragraph form labelled as 'precis' in chapters 13 and 14, where they are linked to the literature.

If you are uncertain just why decentralization in school districts is worth reading about, you might start at chapter 1, which discusses some of the problems which decentralization addresses. A later look at the outcomes of the study, elaborated in chapters 13 and 14 and expressed in point form in chapter 15, would probably be of interest.

If you would like to understand school-based management by vicariously visiting districts and reading statements made by those who have experienced it, then any of chapters 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12 would serve as an initial incursion.

If you are a reader who would like to know about the approach taken in this study, the literature review (comprising chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6) provides a start. This could be followed by the methods used in the inquiry, explained in chapter 7.

Acknowledgments

Many persons were instrumental in helping to bring this study to fruition. First, thanks go to Michael Strembitsky, Superintendent of the Edmonton Public Schools and Emery Dosdall, Superintendent of

School District No. 35 (Langley) for their special insights and permission to conduct interviews in their respective districts. Second, the insights provided by Ian Wilson and John Ruffelle during the early stages of the research are gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also expressed to Larry Sackney for his help at that time. Third, my thanks to Harry Mosychuk of Edmonton for the large quantity of information provided and to Frank Martines for his arrangements, useful discussions, and information provided in Cleveland. Fourth, acknowledgement is for Pat Crehan and Rosalind Kellett, and Barry Lucas for their incisive criticisms and engaging discussions. Fifth, the extensive efforts of the interviewers and analysts, Richard Anderson, Ken Berry, Peter Corcoran, Darryl Craig, Eileen Hatlevik, Rosalind Kellett, Colin Kelley, Mark Stevens, and David Taylor, are commended and gratefully thanked. Sixth, those who served as reactors, including Charlotte Coombs, Pat Crehan, Don Fisher, Oliver Gibson, Emil Haller, Jean Hills, Graham Kelsey, Pierre Michaud, Bob Plaxton, and the several anonymous reviewers who served to strengthen the manuscript greatly. Seventh, Malcolm Clarkson and Jacinta Evans are especially thanked for their special guidance and careful management of the publication task. Eighth, all those generous and thoughtful persons who so willingly provided us the opportunity to ask about their reflections on and experiences with school-based management are acknowledged with great gratitude. Finally, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada is especially thanked for its support of the project with Grant Number 410–83–1086.

PART I: INTRODUCTION

This part addresses the issue of why this book was written. What are some problems for which school-based management might be a solution? Might it create some new opportunities? Why would anyone recommend it? And if it was to be adopted, what might educators in presently centralized districts anticipate? These issues 'set the stage' for the review of the writings on decentralization and the results which follow in later chapters.

Chapter 1

Some Problems, a Recommendation and Anticipations

Some Problems

School administrators in centralized districts were asked about some of the frustrations they face as principals. They responded by articulating a set of complaints about educational administration. One of their critical problems was the lack of flexibility to acquire the resources they wanted to do their jobs. Here are some of the responses noted when principals and other administrators were interviewed in one large suburban district and four small, rural ones.

One set of complaints concerned the acquisition of *equipment* such as office copiers, computers, furniture, projectors and equipment for classes such as physical education, industrial arts, and science laboratories. It may seem odd that school administrators do not have control over the equipment given to their schools. After all, material effects are among the less important resources schools need. One principal replied,

> Dollars are generated [by purchasing department] formulas and the formulas are unknown.

Regarding those formulas, another added

> There appears to be no rhyme nor reason.

They frequently mentioned the distance between the central office and their schools:

> Resource people at the district level are too far removed [from the school].

One interviewer summed up the problem of inflexibility for acquiring material items in his district this way:

> There exists little freedom for principals to use their operational budgets for supplies, textbooks, and smaller capital items. Further, budget transfer appears non-existent. (Berry, 1986, p. 88)

Another respondent said,

> Invariably the sixth item on our priorized list was chosen — it was the cheapest.

The principals appear to feel that not only are the material needs of their schools not being met, but they do not understand the basis on which equipment is distributed to their schools. If school administrators do not have much control over material acquisitions, then it may be assumed that their real authority may be found in the area where the bulk of resources are directed — *personnel*.

School staffs contain vice-principals, counsellors, librarians, teachers of various specialties, and support personnel such as secretaries, clerks, kitchen helpers and teacher aides. What about the ways in which school personnel are provided? An interviewer offered these two remarks:

> All school staffing levels . . . are determined by the central office. (Collins, 1985, p. 37)

> Commonly, the principal has had an opportunity at least to short list a group of candidates before the final decision is made at the central office. (*ibid*, p. 43)

It appears that the way schools are supplied with teachers and support staff is also determined centrally. While such allocations are usually done in consultation with principals, they do not make final decisions as to who may work in their schools, how many staff members they have, or what mix of personnel they have. The pattern follows this comment:

> Resources are usually allocated to schools in accordance with previously established rules or 'norms,' such as one teacher for every twenty-five students. (Garms, Guthrie and Pierce, 1978, p. 267)

The question arises, who knows best what kinds and numbers of personnel that schools require?

If school administrators do not control materiel or personnel acquisitions, are they simply maintainers? What about *maintenance*, which covers daily cleaning to minor repairs and replacements?

Principals seem to be concerned about the schedule of maintenance in their schools and also the way in which custodians are managed. One interviewer writes:

> 'When a school needs painting, when plumbing needs fixing, where new shelving should be built', were mentioned by the interviewees as examples of school maintenance needs which can best be determined on site. (Craig, 1985, p. 35)

Another notes:

> Schedules [for major maintenance work] are determined centrally with very limited input from building principals, leading one principal to comment that this results in 'maintenance by surprise'. (Collins, 1985, p. 41)

As for custodial help, an interviewer stated:

> [Some principals] seemed adamant that [custodial services] was an area where the school should have complete control. By being able to hire small contractors, the school could circumvent the present regulations which allocate staffing on the basis of a square foot formula, not on a need basis. Some schools seem to be heavily overstaffed due to the . . . contract under which the custodians presently operate. (Craig, 1985, p. 36)

It appears that principals feel they cannot direct the priorities for maintenance in their schools, nor can they control the way in which their schools are maintained on a daily basis.

The problem of *flexibility* seemed to be a major one for the persons interviewed. While they usually have control over a budget for supplies, most other resources are distributed to schools by the central office. Principals interviewed in these districts felt that they had very little control over the resources coming their schools, for equipment, personnel, or maintenance matters. One interviewer articulates the principals' position in this way:

> Principals desire more input into school funding and more control over a greater percentage of total school allocation. (Berry, 1986, p. 88)

A major avenue which determines how *resources* are controlled in districts and distributed to schools is the budgeting process. It is easy to infer that the persons who establish the budget are those in authority. How do principals feel about budgeting? Two interviewers observed:

> Principals who were interviewed seemed to see the initial budgeting process as one which is totally controlled by the central office. (Craig, 1985, p. 45)

> Overall maintenance, transportation, supplies, equipment, and programme budgets are determined . . . with very limited input from individual school administrators. (Collins, 1985, p. 37)

The impression given is that school personnel have little control over how priorities are reflected in budgetary decisions. More generally, the problem is described by Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978)

> At the district level, school district budgets are constructed by a small group of people in the district office. (p. 266)

> The results is a budgeting process that is highly centralized, with most decisions flowing from the top down. (p. 267)

After the budget is determined, resources are also acquired by schools via *central office personnel*. Are schools able to acquire what they believe they require? Perhaps not. The problem is that persons in the central office are perceived as

> . . . having their own agendas.

Interviewees felt that central office staff persons have control over resources and they are given to schools as central office staff see fit.

> If the agenda of the helping teachers matches the agenda of the staff, you're laughing.

Another respondent put the problem more bluntly:

> The bean counters have too much power.

The difficulty appears to be that the persons *responsible* for the education of students have *little authority* to control educational resources, while persons *not responsible* for students have *authority* to control resources for schools. How does this problem affect the role of the principal, the person nominally responsible for student learning? Since there is little control, it might be expected that principals are not highly accountable. One interviewer noted that

> [Principals] did not sense a high level of accountability to their immediate superiors within the district. (Tamblyn, 1988, p. 1)

He also indicated that not much effort was made at assessing school performance:

> Other than the principal evaluation process, there is little monitoring of the school.

These views tend to agree with Leithwood and Montgomery (1982) who assert that the principal's role is a complex and contradictory one:

> Ambiguity manifests itself as a lack of clear expectations for the role and conflict about responsibilities; frequently, no viable rationale for the duties assigned to the role and no defensible criteria for assessing principals' performance are available . . . (p. 332)

It seems that principals do not feel particularly *accountable* and that their roles are not clearly specified.

How do principals cope with these problems of resource acquisition which they face? One way is to ask for more than they expect to receive. An interviewer reports that

> Almost all of the interviewees suggested that if principals are to get the things they need they must pad their requests with a bottom half of which they consider expendable. (Craig, 1985, pp. 44–8)

Another practise is to order nonessential items so that budgeted amounts will be spent on time because surpluses cannot be carried forward to the next year. The fear is that if this is not done, budgets will be reduced next year.

But a more obvious strategy is to lobby the central office strongly for what a principal thinks is needed. The same interviewer reports:

> When the participants in this study were discussing resource allocation, a number of terms of the same genre continually surfaced. 'Play the game, cajole, manipulation, exaggeration, and squeaky wheel' were the terms most often encountered. (*ibid*, p. 47)

Three principals commented:

> There are some unique problems in each school, and right now everything has to be okayed by the Board. So unless you really yip and yodel, you don't get anything and have to live with it.
>
> If you cry hard enough you get it.
>
> I've learned the system.

References were made to the 'old boys' club'. But not all principals are members. Two in separate districts said:

> . . . different schools get different answers to their requests depending on the [part of the district] they are in.
>
> There are 'have' and 'have not' schools in this district when there should be a basic supply [of resources] offered to all.

Principals appear to have to resort to a number of *questionable practises* to satisfy school needs for resources. Among them are request padding, spending money on nonessentials, and intensive lobbying. Not all are successful at acquiring resources through these efforts.

There are a number of critical problems facing school educators, if this group of administrators is indicative. One is the lack of flexibility faced by school principals. They have little control over resources deployed to their schools — they do not make key decisions about equipment, personnel kinds or quantity, or maintenance of their buildings. Yet they are considered responsible for the education of the students under their care. A second problem is that the central office personnel are perceived in control of district budgets, most of which affect schools directly. Yet the staff persons in particular are perceived as having the authority to allocate resources for students but they do not have responsibility for their education. The third problem is a consequence of the first two, namely, that principals resort to spending practises which appear inefficient and they are required to lobby for resources, an outcome of which is that more resources are directed to some schools than others.

A Recommendation

Goodlad (1984) argues for more authority to be given to principals and teachers. He sees the need for the capability of school renewal (p. 276). Central to his proposal for school reform is the existence of planning groups in the schools and the ability of schools to have control over their own budgets. Thus all expenditures, including those for staffing, could be made more flexibly. Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978, p. 278) also recommend school-based management, largely as an avenue for increasing parental participation. Is it possible that school-based management could address some of the problems perceived by the administrators interviewed?

As a model for administration, school-based management has been discussed widely. How do educational administrators react when presented with the idea? Based on a considerable amount of experience as teachers and principals, the forty-four educators from the five

centralized districts reflected on what the advent of decentralization might mean for their own circumstances. As a result, they raised some very important issues which accompany the discussion of decentralization in education.

Anticipations and Apprehensions

School-based management may be viewed as a different administrative structure for education. What were some of the reactions to the basic design of decentralization?

Structure

When the interviewers raised the topic of school-based management with the educators in the centralized districts, they were required to agree on a common definition of school-based management with their respondents. One subject gave a clear and (as it turns out) quite accurate description:

> Basically a pot of money is given to the school and the school makes decisions as to how to use that money to acquire the resources necessary to provide an educational programme. Those decisions are made through consultation with general staff, ideally in conjunction with known, stated, and measurable educational objectives.

What might be the extent of decisions permitted by schools under decentralization? Would equipment, personnel and maintenance all be included? Interviewees were not certain. A principal noted that

> School-based management can be looked at on a continuum to some degree, and you can venture down the road towards it in bits and pieces, or in a total way.

There were a number of qualifications about decentralization which were volunteered by the interview subjects. One was possible legislative changes: The School Act would need to be altered to give

> more control to the schools over the educational services they provide . . . and to give school principals the power to hire and fire staff.

Another qualifier was the need to clarify authority and responsibility.

Hatlevik (1986) notes that her respondents specified the requirement that

> the line of authority to make decisions to be clearly established. (p. 39)

and the parameters of responsibility be

> spelled out very clearly so that everybody understood what their role was in this approach. (*ibid*)

Another caveat related to district and school sizes:

> The feeling [was] that the larger the school district and the larger the schools within the district, the greater the amount of decentralization that would be possible. (Collins, 1985, p. 73)

And a final reservation spoke to the need for trust in school personnel:

> Principals may not ethically or educationally approve, but might be tempted to hire less qualified people to make the budget stretch further.

A distinction was made between school-based management with parental control of schools and school-based management which retained administrative control. Interviewees reacted extensively to the idea of direct parental control of schools via school councils. One interviewer reports:

> Several reasons were postulated for not allowing the parents direct control over the schools. Probably the most common given was that most parents are not interested in the administration of schools unless there is a developing crisis situation. (Craig, 1985, p. 41)

Another principal agreed with the 'crisis' view of parental participation by saying

> If things are going to hell in a basket you get a lot of parent participation quickly . . . those people aren't there to help; they're there to bitch. If the parents are happy with what's going on, it's very difficult to get a lot of active participation.

A third suggested that

> The idea is desirable, it's ideal, but in reality, parents just don't care.

In one district, respondents questioned the competence of parents. The interviewer summarizes their remarks by saying:

> Perceptions of schools would be formed based upon the school advisory council members school experiences as a student, not [based on] the present. (Berry, 1986, p. 68)

Further, one principal expressed the view that

> Decision making input on how money would be spent is not appropriate because parents are not employees of the board and shouldn't have that authority, because they're not responsible for the decisions, and not held accountable to anyone.

When using a simple definition of decentralization whereby schools receive money to acquire the resources they need, interviewees noted that there could be a range of decisions permitted and felt that some qualifications were in order. They also offered a number of reasons why parents should *not* control schools via councils, suggesting that participation was based on crisis occurrences, it was difficult to achieve because of apathy, parents were not competent, and that they were not accountable.

Flexibility

Would school-based management result in some of the flexibility which these administrators said that they lack? One principal said:

> [School-based management] gives the principal complete control of the money for the running of his school — including everything from negotiating wages to paying light bills.

An interviewer summarized his respondent's reactions to the range of decisions in this way:

> School-based management meant having within the school's scope of operating functions the power to hire or fire staff, including teachers, custodians, maintenance workers, aides, and secretaries. (Collins, 1985, pp. 45–6)

However, some interviewees do not welcome unlimited authority. The same interviewer also noted that

> Maintenance services would remain largely centralized, both for economic reasons and because principals do not wish to

> become active as general contractors whenever something needs repair or maintenance. (*ibid*, p. 48)

One concern about contracting out maintenance was expressed by another interviewer:

> Many [principals] felt that by allowing contractors in to provide the custodial services, [they] would lose the pride that seems to be part of the custodian's motivation . . . (Craig, 1985, p. 36)

But the flexibility of decision-making can be extended beyond necessities. The ideas of taking initiatives and the pursuit of planning were also expressed in these ways:

> It would be a chance to emphasize a direction *you* want to go.

> [If] a principal was responsible for the long term planning, you could start to take on more different types of responsibility. If you had control of all funds you'd be more selective for long term benefits. You'd have an overall plan instead of a patchwork quilt approach.

Interviewees believed that decentralization would accord principals a wide range of decision making flexibility. However, authority over maintenance services was not fully welcomed. The possibility was raised that the new flexibility could permit initiatives to be taken and encourage long-term school planning.

Accountability

If greater freedom was accorded schools, would they be more accountable and have different expectations for persons in the roles of board members, senior personnel, principals and teachers?

Interviewees foresaw a number of role changes which would likely accompany school-based management. Some of these were at the school board and central office level. It was felt that the school board members would be less involved in school affairs. One summary of views says

> According to those interviewed, the School Board would become a district policy-making and monitoring body, and school-based administrators would become responsible for providing services within overall district policy guidelines and budgetary limitations. (Collins, 1985, p. 67)

The superintendent would also be affected. If decisions were sincerely delegated to principals, then some interviewees believed that he or she would

> no longer have veto power over the decisions made at the school level.

Some respondents believed the authority of central office staff persons would shift markedly. According to one interviewer,

> It is felt that [central office staff] would function almost exclusively in a supporting role, and would lose any decision-making power affecting individual schools. (Collins, 1985, p. 51)

One principal was much more blunt.

> Central office staff would become 'advisors rather than dictators.' (Craig, 1985, pp. 42–3)

Interviewees tended to agree that there would be a substantial impact on the principal's role. As noted by an interviewer, their perception was that

> The principal would become directly accountable for all that goes on within the school, and would control all school resources. (Collins, 1985, p. 46)

A respondent expressed the idea more simply:

> [The] principal is the driving force behind a school-based management school.

Subjects also foresaw a change in the outlook of the principalship in another way:

> [School-based management] would instill a pride in one's work, and spill over as pride in one's school.

> If you run it, you pay the bills; therefore you create ownership and ownership fosters . . . loyalty and dedication . . .

However, some aspects of the role changes were not welcomed. These were some of the new problems which respondents believed they might face as principals under decentralization. Most were concerned about the difficulties of decisions which they had not made before. One saw school-based management as

> a risk for principals — you could lose your job the first year. If you're not a good organizer, or you don't have management skills, you could run out of money.

Another confessed,

> It's nice to make decisions at face level, but sometimes as a principal you don't want to . . . you want somebody else to make it.

Some decisions would be uncomfortable.

> You could hurt people with long term standing in your school if you decide to save money by contracting out janitorial services.

An interviewer commented that

> Several [interviewees] indicated that staffing decisions involving support or professional staff could have unfortunate repercussions. Most did not wish to assume the responsibility for these eventualities. (Hatlevik, 1986, p. 34)

For one, the extent of the new authority was bothersome:

> It's hard enough being a principal during the day with all the other problems, never mind running the night with the janitors etc. It could lead to an early grave!

Most principals believed that teacher and support staff input into decentralized decision-making was necessary for effectiveness and commitment. One interviewer summarized the position in this way:

> A principal who did not consider staff recommendations was not considered likely to be successful with a school-based management school. The staff's aid in the areas of budgeting and planning were seen as 'essential if the school was to run smoothly.' It was suggested . . . that the principal, by heeding the suggestions put forward by his or her staff, would greatly enhance the commitment of the teachers to the school. (Craig, 1985, pp. 39–40)

However, the question arose as to just how democratic these principals were prepared to be under decentralization. An interviewer says:

> The feelings of all the subjects can be summed up by the comment made by one of the district's principals. 'There is only one captain on any ship.' (*ibid*, p. 62)

Two kinds of reactions to the outcome of staff participation were expressed. One was the worry that when teachers were given the opportunity to work with money,

> It would not be good for morale; there may be difficult decisions over whose need is greatest and the squeaky wheel may get the grease. Staff members may be resentful if someone gets something that they wanted and didn't get.

One respondent stated graphically,

> This is a perfect setup for staff to get at each others throats; the principal should have first aid instruction and defensive fighting training.

The other opinion was that participation was voluntary, as expressed by this interviewer:

> Teachers, it was felt, may not be greatly affected in their day-to-day activities, but could have opportunities, if they so wished, to share in determining school-based resource allocations . . . and other aspects of school operations. (Collins, 1985, p. 70)

These interviewees foresaw a number of changes in personnel roles as a result of the potential adoption of decentralization. Board members would be more confined to policy matters; superintendents would not control schools directly; central office staff would no longer have direct authority over schools. But principals would experience the greatest change. Their authority over many kinds of school resources would be increased and greater pride in their schools could result. However, tough decisions would have to be made and some pain would follow. As for staff participation in decision-making, most would welcome it but saw themselves as the ultimate decision-makers. They also had mixed views on the effects of participation, from the likelihood of divisive outcomes to giving staff the opportunity to affect school resource allocations.

Productivity

If school-based management was adopted, would schools be more productive? Would inefficiencies be reduced? Could efficiency be overemphasized? Might educational equality be affected? And are there not some additional costs brought on by decentralization?

Principals believed that decentralization would permit them to direct resources to the tasks needed to be done in their schools. One said:

> Decisions would be made within the confines of an individual building for things that they *know* are their strengths and weaknesses. The school district isn't always aware of your unique problems or concerns.

But a difficulty could be

> prioritizing programs according to how efficient or effective they are. If you have 'x' dollars to spend you have to decide which programs are your best dollar value.

They welcomed the

> ability to carry forward a surplus from one year to the next.

And they anticipated that they could reduce some costs and redirect money:

> With staff input, they have an investment in the school-based management approach and would tend to save where they could, so that other expenditures could be made.

But would an emphasis on productivity and efficiency turn the principal into a technician? Many believed this would happen. One interviewer summarizes the reactions she received:

> These respondents were almost unanimous on one anticipated role change for principals working under school-based management — a potential shift from the supervision of instruction to supervision of the fiscal operation of the school . . . Each of the subjects indicated the principal's potential role change . . . could, and most likely would, prove detrimental to the schools. (Hatlevik, 1986, p. 26)

Some saw a loss of collegiality and even professionalism:

> Principals may become viewed as business managers and risk losing the collegial feelings that they as professional educators share with their staffs. (Collins, 1985, p. 52)

And the issue of leadership was raised as well:

> Principals working in school-based management . . . could become . . . 'more like business managers than educational

> leaders' within a school. This would not occur by choice, but rather out of necessity. (Collins, 1985, p. 52)

While respondents believed that resource allocation by formula would be fairer to schools, a few observed that schools might become less alike if they offered different programs. One noted

> Equality of services may not be offered in a district. For example, some schools may offer French, but not all.

These subjects also perceived that decentralization would incur certain costs, particularly for school administrators. Many anticipated the

> tremendous amount of time needed from both principals and staff.

An interviewer added:

> In fact, 'finding the time to do the extra' was a . . . serious concern expressed by the majority of these educators. (Hatlevik, 1986, p. 32)

One interviewee said about teacher workload,

> How can they possibly be expected to commit more of their time to the running of the schools?

These interviewees believed decentralization would enable them to deploy school resources to school tasks but that it would require them to examine their priorities carefully. They also thought that some costs might be reduced and the monies saved expended on other items to school benefit. But the sharp fear was raised that a concern for such financial matters could turn the principal into a business manager and reduce collegiality and professionalism. They foresaw that equality of resource allocation to schools would be enhanced but that inter-school differences might be magnified. And they strongly expected an increase in workload for principals and possibly other members of school staffs as well.

Change

Subjects saw the potential change to school-based management to be a considerable alteration to the administrative structure of districts. How might a change to decentralization proceed?

One way would be for a state or province to encourage the change. Such a policy was not favoured, as an interviewer notes:

> It was strongly felt that if school-based management were implemented by a consensus from within the district, rather than [from a provincial mandate], chances of success would be much greater. (Craig, 1985, p. 59)

The same interviewer mentions the rate of adoption as a concern:

> Each person interviewed made the same first suggestion: If the district does decide to 'change to a decentralized system of management that it do so very slowly . . . (*ibid*, p. 57)

Many respondents felt that districts would need to make an extensive effort:

> Nobody should be allowed to drift into this system unprepared.

They also felt unprepared themselves. One interviewer notes

> Apprehensions about the principal's role and the technical expertise that may be required under school-based management seemed to overwhelm most of these interviewees. (Hatlevik, 1986, pp. 33–4)

Principals saw new skills being required under decentralization. One remarked:

> Human relation skills are needed so you could work with the staff so that they are involved in the planning. You'd also need planning skills — being able to project what you'll need in the future to build in the flexibility so you could make changes as the needs arise.

An interviewer summarized similar suggestions:

> The respondents felt that school-based administrators would be obliged to become more knowledgeable in areas such as accounting, budgeting, personnel practices, curriculum, and maintenance. (Collins, 1985, p. 69)

And some respondents stressed the effort needed to enhance the new skills. One said:

> It [would be] time consuming to get your own training and to retrain staff to the high intensity of communication to make it work . . .

Some believed that the idea of school-based management would be opposed by groups at the district level or beyond. One interviewer observed that unions may disagree with the change:

> Most notably, there was great concern about dealings with various labour groups and the feeling that they would be opposed to the implementation of school-based management because it could act 'to weaken the influence of the unions in some schools.' (Collins, 1985, p. 60)

Another reflected potential teachers' association concerns:

> It was felt that if the individual schools were to become responsible for the hiring and firing of staff, the [teachers' association] would strongly oppose this system on the grounds that some of the hirings would be politically motivated and that some of the firings could be vindictive in nature. (Craig, 1985, p. 55)

Central office staff personnel might not support the change:

> Another fear . . . was the possibilities that some central office staff may be reassigned to the schools, presenting a threat to the power of the incumbent administration. (Collins, 1985, p. 60)

And principals would certainly not be fully in favour:

> The idea that school-based management would be a threat to the power of some school principals was mentioned several times, with the explanation always being that under the present system each principal manipulates situations in order to corner some special degree of power or influence in the district, and that under the more equitable school-based system, these 'corners of power' would no longer be available. (*ibid*, pp. 60–1)

But not all problems would be ones of outright opposition. Some were perceived to come from the inability of some personnel to either work under decentralization, as in the case of autocratic principals, or the ability of the central office to implement the change successfully.

A number of facilitators to the change were also suggested. In contrast to the view that a voluntary change would be more positive, one interviewer commented:

> Several people felt that the government may wish to increase the accountability for funds within districts, and for this reason

> would be willing to provide the impetus for the implementation of school-based management systems province-wide. (Craig, 1985, p. 50)

At the district level, commitment from the top was seen as quite important:

> It was felt that the major facilitating factor which is necessary is the board's acceptance of the concept of school-based management and its willingness to give up much of its power and responsibility to individual schools. (Collins, 1985, p. 58)

Other sources of support were also anticipated, such as the idea that

> Teachers could also become allies in the movement towards school-based management if they were to see this as a way of having greater input into administration. (Craig, 1985, p. 52)

What was the general attitude toward decentralization among those interviewed? Were they willing to try it? One test was to ask if a person would accept a job under school-based management. Hatlevik (1986) reports a range of responses to the question if principals would accept a position in a district with school-based management (pp. 37–8). Only two out of eight felt qualified for the job. Some would volunteer; some were positive but with qualifications. Others were generally open to the idea, expressed by one in this way:

> If inservice and training were available it would provide a new interest and challenge — a new direction.

She is supported by another interviewer, who says

> From the interviews, the most consistent impression gained of such a management system was one of support for the concept. (Collins, 1985, p. 67)

But other groups of respondents were less convinced. A third interviewer says

> Most principals, despite wanting more school autonomy, are wary of adapting any extensive school-based management model. (Berry, 1986, p. 93)

It appears that many respondents favour the idea but others have reservations, an outcome in agreement with Kowalski (1980) who polled principals' attitudes toward decentralized budgeting and found that 73 per cent were in favour of the concept because of the flexibility

it was perceived to offer and the faculty participation which it was believed to permit (p. 71).

Some subjects believed that adoption of decentralization should be voluntary to be successful, but others indicated that the province could provide some initiative for the change. They recommended the transition proceed slowly and nominated several areas of skills which would need work, particularly technical ones. Opposition could come from unions, teachers' associations, central office staff, and some principals. Support could emanate from the board's acceptance of the concept and some teachers, as well as many principals. Most respondents were positively disposed to school-based management but a minority was wary of the idea.

The Purpose of This Inquiry

Interviewees in the centralized districts raised a number of very important issues regarding school-based management. They anticipated that decentralization would be a significant structural change. They believed that schools would be accorded a considerable flexibility of decision-making. They also foresaw a greater degree of accountability reflected in role changes for district personnel and even more for principals. They suggested that schools could be made more productive in some ways, but indicated that additional costs and other effects could result as well. And they surmised how the process of change to school-based management might come about. Their commentary suggests that decentralization has some potential to improve public education.

Were they right in their assessment of school-based management? Are their anticipations and apprehensions accurate? One way to answer these questions is to investigate. If some facts about decentralization could be provided, particularly ones from those persons who work in districts with school-based management, then the issues could be examined and some tentative conclusions drawn. Fortunately, a number of districts have adopted school-based management and much can be learned from their experiences. This is particularly true of Edmonton, Alberta, a large district which started decentralization in 1976. We need to know: What does school-based management look like? Does it offer schools flexibility? Does it require accountability? Do schools become more productive? And how is it implemented?

Before we ask those educators about their experiences with school-based management, it is important to examine the literature on

decentralization to form a broader picture of organizations, how they can be structured, what some of the effects of decentralization may be, and how organizations can be changed. Let the writers on organizations speak!

PART II: A LOOK AT THE LITERATURE

How can the concerns and anticipations offered by the educators in chapter 1 be understood at an abstract level? One way of approaching this question is to consider decentralization to be a matter of organizational structure, explored in chapter 2. Since the structural-functional viewpoint is the one adopted in this volume, its assumptions and some alternatives to it are examined in chapter 3. The study of organizational structure suggests that the form of decentralization being investigated here is administrative — it takes place within organizations. That form is in contrast to the other major form, called political, discussed in chapter 4. Writings on organizational decentralization specifically in education are addressed in chapter 5.

Chapter 2

The Structural View of Organizations

What are the general kinds of structures available to school districts? While there are many typologies available, Mintzberg has provided a reasonably complete set of alternatives. After an examination of them, two important assumptions made about decentralization are explored — those of the amount of tolerance for disorder and the location of knowledge in the hierarchy. Then, two other aspects of decentralization are discussed, namely how it may be defined and broken down into components or more elemental parts. Next, and perhaps most importantly, three objectives that organizations commonly have when proceeding to decentralize are examined. Finally, the process of change to decentralization is addressed.

Organizational Structures

Henry Mintzberg produced a book entitled *The Structuring of Organizations* in 1979, followed by a more popular version, *Structure in Fives*, in 1983. He defines structure as the

> total of the ways in which [an organization] divides its labor into distinct tasks and then achieves coordination among them. (1979, p. 2)

After an analysis of structure based upon division of labour and coordination, he offers five types of organizations which reflect the various ways in which districts and schools may be structured. The reader is referred to Mintzberg (1979 or 1983) for an extensive exposition of the five, presented in a way which is well-documented in the 1979 version, highly readable, richly detailed and thoughtful. What is offered here is a precis of each and some commentary on how they

may be applied to education. They are not offered in the order presented in his book, but in the order of potential relevance to educational systems, from the least applicable to the greatest.

The Simple Structure

The most noteworthy attribute of this type is that decision-making authority is concentrated at the organizational apex. Such a concentration can be permanent or temporary as shown by Mintzberg's (1979) example: 'a school system in a state of crisis' (p. 305). Yet, in normal times, school districts are rather centralized since their central offices make most of the decisions on how most of the resources are to be deployed in schools. The model of the simple structure most closely fits an organization in which one person makes most of the key decisions. Mintzberg notes that this model fits the entrepreneurial firm with a charismatic leader (*ibid*, p. 310). While the simple structure may also match the case of some schools with autocratic principals, in most districts of all but the smallest size, the central office staff has authority delegated to it, so districts are normally decentralized to that extent. The main utility of the simple structure model for public education is the provision of a baseline of relatively extreme centralization against which other models and existing organizations can be judged.

The Adhocracy

The term 'adhocracy' is used by Mintzberg to describe a structure which aims to be innovative and solve problems directly for clients on a project basis. Its key part is its support staff combined with its operating core. Coordination is attained via mutual adjustment (accommodations between persons) and the structure changes shape frequently (*ibid*, p. 431). Examples include the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Film Board of Canada, research-based organizations, advertising firms and consulting businesses. Because each task encountered is relatively unique, adhocracies do not have the ability to apply efficient techniques learned on one project to the next. Such organizations tend to be young and bureaucratize as they age (*ibid*, p. 455). Their fluid structures provide many organizational ambiguities, which in turn may explain why they are highly politicized. Mintzberg considers them to be Darwinian, fluid, highly competitive, and ruthless (*ibid*, p. 462).

Does the adhocracy model have any relevance for districts or schools? Perhaps it does for some alternative schools, conceived as experiments to break out of the mold of rules surrounding public schools. The structure suggests that such schools could be more innovative, but at the cost of ambiguity, politicization, and inefficiency. These features could be most detrimental to ordinary schools, if educational institutions are perceived as being places where there is general agreement as to goals and means. Such perceptions may be very important to parents who entrust the schools with their children for several hours daily.

The Machine Bureaucracy

The machine bureaucracy is not a bureaucracy which makes machines — necessarily. Mintzberg's examples include post offices, banks, prisons and mass production firms (*ibid*, p. 314). More precisely, it is coordinated by the standardization of work processes, has the technical staff as its key part and is centralized except for some authority which is given to its technical staff. In fact, the analysts emerge as key personnel with considerable authority. Mintzberg notes that

> The only ones to share any real informal power with the top managers are the analysts in the technostructure. (*ibid*, p. 317)

Further,

> [t]he first-line manager's job can, in fact, become so circumscribed that he [sic] can hardly be said to function as a manager at all.

His view is that rules permeate the entire structure.

Apart from the lack of certainty of the knowledge base as evident in manufacturing organizations, such as camera companies, school districts may be characterized by some of the features of the machine bureaucracies. Comments made in chapter 1 revealed the importance of the analysts (central office staff) and the abundance of rules (particularly with reference to resource allocation).

Mintzberg attributes certain environmental conditions to machine bureaucracies: the environment is simple and stable; they tend to be large in size and producers of standardized products; they are established in the way government offices are (*ibid*, p. 325). However, he points out that they have been criticized severely for their neglect of human relations (*ibid*, p. 334) and lack of innovation (*ibid*, p. 346).

Machine bureaucracies appear to resemble school districts to some extent because they share some of the same characteristics and difficulties.

The Professional Bureaucracy

This model of organizational structure hinges on the standardization of skills of professional people. The key part of the structure is the operating core and the model is a highly decentralized one. Mintzberg's examples of professional bureaucracies include universities, general hospitals, *school systems*, public accounting firms, and social work agencies (*ibid*, p. 348).

Coordination is achieved via the common skills and knowledge which the professionals have learned from outside the organization, much of it prior to entry, such as in medical school. Considerable latitude is given to each person and the need for communication among persons is not great. The service process is one of consultation with a client and then pigeonholing of client problems is done so that a standard program may be applied (*ibid*, p. 352). According to Mintzberg, there is no need for the professionals to be supervised directly, nor much requirement that they coordinate their efforts (*ibid*, p. 355).

While such a description seems appropriate for physician-patient relationships, it may be less suited to the way educational services are provided in schools. There, students are grouped in classes without much individualization. The consultation process involving diagnosis and prescription may not always operate. Further, the professionals do not work in isolation: their services are interlocked through established schedules during the school day. Variations in the routines are made for special events which themselves require teacher action such as student supervision. This demands much more coordination than it does knowledge and skills from teacher education programs. Because students are grouped and timetables are linked, the roles of teachers may not fit closely the pattern of Mintzberg's professional bureaucracy.

Another way in which schools may vary from this model is the extent to which teachers control schools. Mintzberg (*ibid*, p. 358) labels the professional bureaucracy a 'highly democratic structure'. While Mintzberg shows how doctors and university faculty are quite successful at controlling their respective organizations, the average teacher does not necessarily vote on the critical issues facing the school, nor does he or she control the allocation of resources in the school, as

noted in chapter 1. Such authority is retained at a higher administrative level. Again, the relevance of the model is suspect.

But the professional bureaucracy remains very useful as an option for school organizations. If they were to function as Mintzberg suggests they do, what would be some of the outcomes? Mintzberg provides some answers when he looks some of the issues that professional bureaucracies encounter (*ibid*, p. 371). Among them are autonomy which leads to perfection of skills but also to a lack of control over deficiencies such as problems of coordination, discretion, and innovation (*ibid*, pp. 372–6). Thus, it would appear that the professional bureaucracy has an attendant set of weaknesses if Mintzberg is correct. If schools were modeled in their structure, it is quite likely that the same positive and negative attributes would emerge. However, none of Mintzberg's ideal types noted thus far, the simple structure, the adhocracy, the machine bureaucracy or the professional bureaucracy match school district structure very well. There is one more to go.

The Divisionalized Form

For the purposes of this volume, Mintzberg's divisional form is most important. Its structure and processes are presented, along with some of its problems.

Organizations which are structured by division have middle line units as their most salient characteristic (*ibid*, p. 380). He states that they define their units on a market basis, which constitute a

> set of quasi-autonomous entities coupled together by a central administrative structure. (*ibid*, p. 381)

Headquarters coordinates the divisions using the standardization of outputs. He notes that most of the largest corporations, along with multiversities and some hospital systems are organized in this way.

School districts appear to have aspects of the divisionalized structure. They have two obvious divisions, elementary and secondary, though one of these is dependent on the other for the flow of students. Another way in which they are partially divisionalized is with the school conceived as the unit which is specialized by geography and to some extent by kind of program offered. However, school autonomy to deploy resources is abridged as noted in chapter 1 and

output measures are not used extensively as a means for school coordination.

Mintzberg's view of divisional administration is that the divisional manager is required to plan so that personnel direct their energies toward performance goals (*ibid*, p. 385). But he asks,

> . . . does divisionalization constitute decentralization? Not at all; it constitutes the vesting of considerable decision-making power in the hands of a few people — the market unit managers in the middle line, usually at the top of it — nothing more. (1983, p. 104)

Thus, most major corporations are only partly decentralized. Levels of authority to make decisions within divisions are at the discretion of the unit managers.

Divisional autonomy is quite circumscribed, however, Mintzberg (1979) specifies the kinds of control retained by the headquarters or central office: management of the strategic portfolio so that it can change the divisions, products, and markets; allocation of overall resources; design of the performance control system; replacement of division managers; monitoring of division behaviour; and provision of certain support services (p. 389). Beyond these functions, divisions have considerable freedom and often their own technical support system (*ibid*, p. 397).

He also asserts that the divisional form has the economic advantages of aiding efficient allocation of capital within the organization, and increasing strategic responsiveness (*ibid*, p. 415), but it does not encourage innovation (*ibid*, p. 418). These features are examined in greater detail later in this review.

While Mintzberg claims that the divisionalized form is resident in school systems (*ibid*, p. 402), it is evident from chapter 1 that school principals do not have the authority to deploy resources (including personnel) the way divisional managers do. Further, their success is not dependent on their outputs. Would a change to divisionalization in school districts be advisable? Mintzberg makes the strong point that public service agencies, such as schools, are *not* suited to the divisionalized form. This is partly because divisions are seldom divested in the public service, so that this avenue for renewal is blocked. Another reason is that divisional managers are usually given control over personnel selection, discipline, transfer and dismissal, a set of responsibilities seldom granted public service managers (*ibid*, p. 428). But Mintzberg's major reservation stems from the inability of public agencies to measure the attainment of their social goals. He

warns emphatically that those public agencies adopting the divisionalized form have three choices. They can abandon attempts at control (except for the appointment of socialized managers), they can control using work process rules, or they can impose control using artificial objectives (*ibid*, p. 428). His examples of responses to these conditions are managerial actions which include lying about needs, stockpiling materials and hiring influence pedlars to make deals outside the organization.

It is quite possible that school districts have essentially ignored control apart from appointing principals who have been well socialized as teachers, if the comments on accountability in chapter 1 are indicative. However, their present organization also has a plethora of rules regarding use of resources. Principals are then faced with bending and breaking rules, stockpiling and lobbying to gain the resources they believe they need for their schools; this sounds like divisionalization gone awry.

Are school districts divisionalized or not? The divisionalized form is a model which partly describes school districts as they exist today. Yet it departs considerably from present district structures where the authority of schools to make decisions is concerned. As a model which school districts could adopt, it may have considerable potential for the improvement of the delivery of educational services. Such a possibility is investigated in this monograph.

Mintzberg's five structures have been presented briefly and their tentative connection to districts and schools noted. Each has some applicability to schools and districts, but none fits well. But Mintzberg was chosen because he has provided a most complete and pertinent analysis and synthesis of organizational structure, particularly with reference to decentralization. He is mostly concerned with the ways that structures function. By taking a neutral stance, Mintzberg does not explore how human values might enter into organizational design. However, as will be shown, his work offers one of the most useful vehicles for providing a general perspective within which school-based management can be understood.

Assumptions of Decentralization

Interest in decentralization has been evident for many centuries. Kochen and Deutsch (1980, p 5) mention that decentralization has followed the collapse of one-man empires. More positively, the Roman Empire is usually seen as being decentralized and its longevity is

attributed to the discretion given to governors and generals under conditions of infrequent and unreliable communications (Jay, 1970, p. 69).

In modern times, the idea of decentralization has taken considerable prominence in the divisionalization of large corporations, the most apparent example being General Motors. Chandler (1962) investigated the divisionalization of four large companies, including 'GM'. He specified the processes under which firms grew, encountered problems of complexity and diversity, and then selected ways in which they make themselves more manageable. More widely, the concepts of centralization and decentralization arise in many disciplines and fields of study, such as anthropology, history, philosophy, theology, the social sciences, law and accounting as sketched by Brooke (1984, p. 39).

Discussions of the background to decentralization (and centralization, too) often rest on two assumptions about the nature of organizations. One of these is the need for some balance between the level of order and disorder; the other is the locus of knowledge in the structure.

The Condition of Disorder

To some extent, organization implies order. To organize means to establish order. This thought suggests that without order, there is no organization to behold. Yet, task accomplishment may require some degree of disorder.

Simon (1960) puts the problem of disorder and decentralization rather simply. He believes there is an optimal level of for each class of decisions. Schumacher (1973, p. 243) expresses much the same idea with some elegance:

> . . . any organization has to strive continuously for the orderliness of *order* [original italics] and disorderliness of creative *freedom* [original italics]. And the specific danger inherent in large-scale organization is that its natural bias and tendency favour order, at the expense of creative freedom. (p. 243)

One way to counteract the stated natural bias and tendency toward order is to invoke the 'Principle of Subsidiarity', so that

> . . . the burden of proof lies always on those who want to deprive a lower level of its function . . . *they* [original italics] have to prove that the lower level is incapable of fulfilling its

> function satisfactorily and that the higher level can actually do much better. (*ibid*, p. 244)

But organizations centralize. And Brooke (1984, p. 170) offers some reasons why. Among them is 'The threat of disaster' which implies the need for central control to map strategies, particularly those which may not be in the lower units' specific interests. Just as pertinent is Brooke's 'Lack of confidence', which seems closely parallel to Simon's remark that 'it feels safer' (1957, p. 235). This reason reflects on head office's view of the lack of competence and trustworthiness of the units to make informed and proper decisions.

Basic grounds for decentralization are sometimes the opposite of those for centralization. They include 'the ability of the units to manage themselves' (Brooke, 1984, p. 170), which suggests that either the lower levels are competent or could be trained to become so, and a '[f]ramework of confidence and trust' (*ibid*), which implies that not only are the units able, but they are of sufficiently upstanding character to make ethical and generally wise decisions. According to Mintzberg (1979) organizations may tend to retain more power than is required at the strategic apex (p. 212).

Thus the need for order and the tolerance of relative disorder appear to influence the degrees of centralization/decentralization which may be observed in organizations. Crisis, the larger picture, competency, and trust each may influence the willingness of the apex to share decision making authority.

It is difficult to know the degree of disorder which might be generally tolerated in schools and districts. Their present structures are replicated across the continent from Newfoundland to Hawaii and from the Arctic Circle to the Rio Grande. Further, arguments for the need for order are strong ones among educators; the crisis of retrenchment is used to justify top level decision making; district goals and state or provincial mandates require some unity of direction; the level of competence in some sets of principals and school personnel is not high; there may be grounds for not trusting them beyond the minor decisions now made about school supplies as illustrated in chapter 1. It may be that educators, who initially chose teaching over more competitive and changing careers, have a strong preference for order.

The Condition of Knowledge

The issue of where knowledge to make decisions is located in the

organizational hierarchy is one which is of both theoretical and practical concern. Simon (1957) points out

> The insulation of the higher levels of the administrative hierarchy from the world of fact known at first hand by the lower levels is a familiar administrative phenomenon. (p. 238)

It might also be accurate to say that higher-level managers have different kinds of information not always available to lower-level managers. Mintzberg (1983) says

> The top managers, . . . , see errors committed below and believe they can do better, either because they believe themselves smarter or because they think they can more easily coordinate decisions. Unfortunately, in complex situations, this inevitably leads to a state known as 'information overload.' People at the bottom of the hierarchy with the necessary knowledge end up having to defer to managers at the top who are out of touch with the reality of the situation. (p. 96)

And one of Brooke's (1984) reasons for decentralization is 'holding of specialized knowledge in the units' (p. 170). These authors give the clear impression that the needed knowledge to attain organizational objectives is obviously resident at the lower levels. Not only do unit managers have specific knowledge of their circumstances, but they also may have specialized knowledge at hand.

However, there is no question that '. . . possession of scarce knowledge, expertise, or ability' may be at headquarters (*ibid*). Further, lower units, enmeshed in their own contexts, may lack '. . . the ability to see the whole picture' (p. 170). The existence of certain kinds of knowledge at the central office as compared to units seems quite evident. The ability of units to appreciate the wider context or all the organization's goals is probably more debatable. What emerges from this discussion of knowledge is that both higher and lower levels may possess different kinds of knowledge of what the problems are and how to solve them.

Clearly, when a district's central office is well-staffed with supervisors, coordinators, and consultants, it can be said to have a good deal of specialized knowledge — certainly more than schools. The staff has a higher level of education, more experience with special problems, and a wider perspective than school-based personnel do. Yet it is the educators in the schools who have considerable levels of university education, the commitment to students as their prime responsibility, the facts of their students' immediate circumstances, and the job of

carrying out the integrated set of activities which is a school. Another facet of the knowledge problem is that if the district staff members were dissipated among schools, the district would have no core of experts and all leadership initiatives would have to come from district line officers or from school personnel. But what does it mean to decentralize?

Some Definitions and Dimensions of Decentralization

How may decentralization be defined? What are some of its components? It is useful to know with some precision how the term is used and how it has been analyzed.

Definitions of Decentralization

At this point in the discussion it is important to note that the form of decentralization being emphasized here is that which is called 'organizational'. It does not have participation or local autonomy as its primary objective. Kochen and Deutsch (1980) emphasize this idea by asserting that decentralization is only a means to such goals as responsiveness, service quality, and lower costs (p. 17). The desirability of decentralization is then based on the performance of a service.

Etzioni (1975, p. 155) also stresses the distinction between the two forms, one which may be called 'political', the other which is organizational. He suggests that political decentralization may exist for its own sake, while organizational decentralization, which is revokable, is a technique. The reader is referred to chapter 4 for a discussion of political forms of decentralization. But is it possible to define decentralization usefully? Mintzberg (1979) says

> The fact is that no one word can possibly describe a phenomenon as complex as the distribution of power in the organization. (p. 184)

He defines decentralization as

> . . . THE EXTENT TO WHICH POWER IS DISPERSED AMONG MANY INDIVIDUALS . . . [original emphasis]

So decentralization becomes, roughly, the way power is spread. But Brooke (1980) notes that power can be formal or informal (p. 70); it is possible for a person to have power without legitimacy. Since

organizational structure is of primary concern, Brooke suggests that power, which he conceives as ability to influence, be separated conceptually from formal, legitimated decision making authority. If Brooke's advice is taken, it may be wise to alter Mintzberg's definition accordingly:

> DECENTRALIZATION IS THE EXTENT TO WHICH AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS IS DISTRIBUTED AMONG THE ROLES IN AN ORGANIZATION

This definition is varied by using the concepts of authority and role to depersonalize the ways in which decisions are made. It shows that decentralization (or centralization) is a matter of degree, because the same words can be used as a definition for centralization. But mostly, it gives a reference point for discussion. There is no question that decentralization is a complex idea and that any simple definition such as this one does not capture the richness of the concept.

Some Dimensions of Decentralization

The concept of decentralization (and its complement, centralization) may be analyzed, that is, taken apart for examination of its components. Three important sources attack this problem; they are examined in turn.

The book by Kochen and Deutsch entitled *Decentralization: Sketches Toward a Rational Theory* (published in 1980) is one of the few in which the topic is treated extensively. Kochen and Deutsch provide their logical analysis of the term:

> (A) decentralizes operation or function (B) in service organization (C) at level (D) to extent (E) at time (F) by means of (G) in order to (H). (p. 18)

This description reflects some of the idea's complexity and is consistent with the dimensions (*ibid*, p. 22) which they say correspond roughly to those posited by prior authors. Although they offer eight, the four salient ones for this discussion are: (i) the number of particular tasks performed by specialized agents; (ii) the ways clients request service and response time; (iii) the number and nature of decisions that may be made at lower levels; (iv) participation in decision-making.

There is no question that these dimensions show many of the basic ideas inherent in the concept of decentralization. While Kochen and Deutsch (1980) assert that their work roughly reflects that of other

writers, no clear account is given just how they are building on their thinking (p. 28). The lack of a specified connection means that it is hard to know which of the four are well grounded and which are being volunteered. Unfortunately, this criticism applies throughout the book. Many general statements are made without apparent substantiation. This condition gives the impression that Kochen and Deutsch are less interested in the major conceptual issues involved in decentralization than they are in deriving the formulas which are intended to solve the relatively particular problems of service queues. The result of this apparent focus is that they have not provided a clear synthesis of the dimensions of decentralization. Another problem in reading Kochen and Deutsch is that paragraphs are sometimes unrelated to one another and sentences not entirely connected (such as those on p. 242). The combination of these conditions results in considerable frustration for the reader who wishes to locate elements of secure knowledge on the topic of decentralization.

Another major indepth source on decentralization is Brooke's *Centralization and Autonomy: A Study of Organizational Behaviour*, published in 1984. The aim of that volume is to provide some insights into the often-observed swings between centralization and decentralization (which Brooke labels 'autonomy'). He makes no attempt to specify dimensions of his topic but uses the word 'horizontal' to mean participative or political decentralization and 'vertical' as hierarchical or organizational decentralization. This distinction is congruent with that of Kochen and Deutsch. Brooke also notes that

> Decentralization to a particular level may imply centralization from that level downwards: one person's autonomy [meaning decentralization] precluding that of his or her subordinates.

This observation agrees with Mintzberg's (1983) concept of divisionalization (p. 104). It suggests that if school districts were decentralized down to a key role such as the principal, schools themselves could remain highly centralized.

Brooke addresses the issues of centralization and decentralization extensively. The lack of a general conceptualization of centralization/decentralization limits the book's usefulness, however. Discussions of potential dimensions are scattered throughout the volume but not integrated. Two further problems are quite evident and probably caused by the highly discursive style in which the book is written. One is that general concepts are used without connection to the sources from which they are taken, somewhat in the manner of Kochen and Deutsch. Again, the reader often has difficulty tracking the ideas. In

Brooke's case there seems to be too much written where a few words would do. This style gives the impression that the author is more comfortable at sounding authoritative rather than expending the effort to do the well-grounded academic homework, although there are many fine references. The other problem is closely related, and is the use of trite or hackneyed expressions throughout the book. Such use may make some readers 'feel more at home', but it undermines the potential seriousness of the messages to the reader who is groping for conceptual substance. The outcomes of these shortcomings are that the volume is not as helpful at organizing a reader's thinking about centralization/decentralization as it could have been and its utility is limited to selective points, some of which have been quoted here.

Mintzberg (1979) also addresses the issue of decentralization quite extensively. His starting point is that structure comes about because of two opposing needs: the division of labour into various tasks and the coordination of the different tasks (p. 2). Considerable discourse is devoted to the implications of division of labour and coordination, and the reader is referred to the several chapters on organizational design and function (*ibid*, pp. 1–180). Decentralization is then examined. He considers the many ways in which the term is used (*ibid*, p. 184).

There are two key dimensions of decentralization, according to Mintzberg (*ibid*, pp. 185–208). The first is *vertical/horizontal* (*ibid*, p. 185). Vertical decentralization refers to the extent decision-making authority is shared *down* the hierarchy of management. It involves line persons from the chief executive to the lowest subordinate and can be placed within any role in the line of authority. For example, a school district would be more vertically decentralized as the locus of authority progressed from the board, superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, head, to the teacher.

The other aspect of the first dimension is horizontal decentralization, defined as the dispersal of authority to non-line or staff members who may be resident at any level in the organization (*ibid*, p. 185). For example, if the authority of the superintendent was shared with the central office *staff* (not just line), then the district would be decentralized horizontally. Mintzberg comments:

> ...TO THE EXTENT THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAS NEED OF SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE, NOTABLY BECAUSE CERTAIN DECISIONS ARE HIGHLY TECHNICAL ONES, CERTAIN EXPERTS ATTAIN CONSIDERABLE INFORMAL POWER. [original emphasis] (p. 199)

48

He also asserts that such horizontal decentralization reduces the decision making 'power' of lower-line managers (*ibid*, p. 195). It is possible that a considerable number of school districts reflect this structure, if the comments in chapter 1 about authority are indicative. At the school level, if staff members resident in schools were given authority to make decisions, then schools would be horizontally decentralized to roles such as counsellors and learning specialists.

Mintzberg's second dimension is called *selective/parallel* (*ibid*, p. 187). By 'selective' he means that only certain kinds of decisions are dispersed to the organization and others are retained. His examples include the possibility of retaining financial decisions at the strategic apex but moving production decisions to the first-line supervisors. Kinds of decisions which could be selectively dispersed in school districts include school level supplies, equipment, and personnel, while decisions regarding utilities, maintenance, and expert services could be retained by the central office. Another word which might describe the issue of what decisions to decentralize is 'scope'.

The other facet of the second dimension is parallel decentralization. Mintzberg uses 'parallel' to mean dispersal of many (but not all) decisions to the same place. It seems reasonable to interpret 'same place' as 'same role'. His examples include the dispersal of 'finance, marketing, and production decisions' to the 'division managers in the middle line' (p. 187). Parallel decentralization for schools could mean that their authority to plan and make decisions would encompass a much greater proportion of the resources they typically consume.

But could a district or an organization be fully decentralized? Mintzberg admits that

> of course, such vertical decentralization must always be *somewhat* selective. That is, some decision-making power is always retained at the strategic apex. (*ibid*, p. 191)

When the two dimensions proposed by Mintzberg are examined in this way, it seems that organizations can be both vertically and horizontally decentralized *and* use selective and parallel dispersal of authority at the same time. If that conclusion is correct, then there are actually four dimensions, grouped for convenience into pairs. 'Vertical' and 'horizontal' may sound opposite, but they are not, since dispersion can be both down the hierarchy and across to staff roles at the same time. The same applies for selective and parallel since some kinds of decisions can be shared *and* those decisions can be delegated to the same places. But the four terms are not strictly independent, as Mintzberg acknowledges (*ibid*, p. 191). Vertical decentralization is

always partly selective. And all authority could be resident in the line officers, so that vertical could preclude horizontal decentralization. Although not fully precise, these dimensions provide some useful guideposts in comprehending how decentralization may be analyzed.

How do Mintzberg's dimensions compare with those of Kochen and Deutsch? Coordination and delegation of authority, one of Kochen and Deutsch's dimensions addresses the same concerns as does Mintzberg's vertical and horizontal dimension. Functional specialization integrates fairly well with the selective and parallel dimension. But the other two of Kochen and Deutsch, feedback responsiveness and participation in decision-making, are not seen as integral to decentralization by Mintzberg. Perhaps it is just that Kochen and Deutsch's view of decentralization is both more global and more mathematical than that of Mintzberg's structural perspective.

Generally, Mintzberg's analysis of decentralization appears to be the most helpful of those authors reviewed. His dimensions do not fit well with Kochen and Deutsch's, but the same terrain is evident. The issues raised by Brooke are similar ones, but Mintzberg, starting from an amply evident theoretical base and using over 200 prior authors, was able to generate a much more coherent theory for understanding decentralization using the structural functional viewpoint. Moreover, his writing style is remarkably readable and quite precise with reference to where ideas originate, although his own reflections are allowed to enter into gaps in the flow of discourse.

Reasons for Organizational Decentralization

According to the literature, decentralization is often considered to be a means to achieve three goals. They are organizational flexibility, accountability and productivity.

Flexibility

The idea of flexibility refers to the capacity to change and capability of modification (*Websters'*, 1968). But decentralization may not produce such a state, as noted by Brooke (1984)

> The word 'flexibility' . . . signals one of the many paradoxes inherent in the subject [of decentralization]. Where quick action is required at the centre, the need for flexibility suggests

> centralization, but the reverse is true when the units have to be able to respond fast [sic] to changing or competitive conditions. (p. 181)

So if decisions are delegated to lower units, sharp realignments or suitable reactions to problems such as retrenchment may not be possible. Yet speed of response at local sites seems to require capacity to make local decisions. Brooke states his reason for flexibility in this way. That is the inability of the central office to make sufficiently applicable or adequately quick decisions for the units (*ibid*, p. 170). Brooke's justification is backed up by Mintzberg's (1979, p. 183) assertion that decentralization permits quick response to local conditions. Simple enough.

Kochen and Deutsch (1980, p. 163) also suggest flexibility is an important virtue because responsive links between providers and recipients of human services are highly valued by nearly all persons. Their use of 'nearly all' implies that there are some exceptions; it would be interesting to speculate on why some persons might not share this belief. Kochen and Deutsch also consider the concept of responsiveness, which they define as the time needed to deliver an acceptable response (*ibid*, p. 11).

So flexibility implies not just that a service agency respond to a client's request, but that response be rendered within a time deemed reasonable by the client and perhaps by the agency as well. Kochen and Deutsch go further than the idea of just meeting the client's wishes. They say that decentralization should be found to have a greater amount of responsibility, time and resources given to lower levels. Moreover, as an organization becomes more decentralized, they believe it may become more innovative. It is not clear from Kochen and Deutschs' placement of this assertion if they are assuming or concluding the connections made between flexibility and innovation. But it is an intriguing thought that a large amount of flexibility might permit innovative responses to client needs and not simply mundane ones within a reasonable time.

Mintzberg (1979) supports the same idea: '. . . it is a stimulus for motivation' (p. 183). He suggests that the attraction and retention of creative and intelligent people is aided by the latitude of decision making afforded them. This logic implies that if an organization is inflexible, no creative or intelligent persons would want to work there. In a more popular vein, Schumacher (1973) rather elegantly argues for the idea that flexibility may lead to greater creativity:

> In any organization, large or small, there must be a certain clarity and orderliness; if things fall into disorder, nothing can be accomplished. Yet, orderliness, as such, is static and lifeless; so there must be plenty of elbowroom and scope for breaking through the established order, to do things never anticipated by the guardians of orderliness, the new, unpredicted and unpredictable outcome of a man's [sic] creative idea. (p. 243)

Perhaps he is being very optimistic.

Decentralization is viewed by these authors as a necessary, but not sufficient condition for greater flexibility, meaning a higher level of responsiveness to satisfy the changing needs of clients. And although an organization may not be designed specifically to produce innovations (as Mintzberg's adhocracy is), the level of innovation in it could possibly be increased if sufficient flexibility of decision making is provided.

Accountability

If units in an organization are given greater freedom to make decisions, then the need arises to have them held accountable for their actions using some mechanisms of accountability.

The idea of having to demonstrate the achievement of objectives has not received a great deal of attention from writers on decentralization, perhaps because it is assumed to be in place when private sector organizations are being studied. But it is stressed when encountered. Brooke (1984) states

> The control system represents the perspiration without which the inspiration is easily dissipated. (p. 89)

Drucker (1985) looks at the problem of inspired goals another way. He says of persons in public agencies,

> . . . they tend to see their mission as a moral absolute rather than as economic and subject to a cost/benefit calculus. . . . If one is 'doing good,' then there is no 'better'. (p. 179)

He recommends a clear definition of mission and a realistic statement of goals for those in the public service and suggests that when agencies fail, their objectives may be wrong (*ibid*, p. 183). In his rather informal style, Drucker (1977) says globally

> Only if targets are defined can resources be allocated to their attainment, priorities and deadlines be set, and somebody be held accountable for the results. (p. 135)

He tackles the problem of measurement and uses the need to measure grade-level reading attainment as an example.

Brooke (1984) adds the problem of optimization to the problem of measurement (p. 88). He asserts that local optimization (in the pursuit of local objectives) may risk global suboptimization (in the pursuit of global goals). If Brooke's comment is correct, a system of accountability which permitted excessive freedom among the units could result in the lack of attainment of general objectives. An example might be a school's pursuit of physical education over academic basics.

Mintzberg (1979) also raises the issue of freedom and accountability in his discussion on how coordination is achieved under divisionalization (p. 191). Noting that each market unit is 'quasi-autonomous' when divisionalized, he stresses that it is important

> . . . to ensure that the autonomy is well used, that each market contributes to the goals considered important by the strategic apex. So the strategic apex faces the delicate task of controlling the behavior of its market units without restricting their autonomy unduly.

For Mintzberg, results in divisionalized structures are assessed primarily, but not completely, by 'performance control systems' (*ibid*, p. 191). The concept of a performance control system, if applied to school districts, would imply an assessment of district objectives without excessively limiting school autonomy or having deleterious effects on school objectives. To be genuinely useful, the system would need to incorporate measures which are comparable across schools. Such a system would be quite ambitious, and some would say, impossible. As mentioned earlier, Mintzberg believes that since public agency outputs are not measured in dollars, the divisionalization of public agencies is unsuccessful because such evaluation systems have failed to provide the desired coordination and they have generated so many negative effects (*ibid*, pp. 428–9).

The authors reviewed appear to say that accountability is an important element in organizations and that accountability systems are required under decentralization. Further, those mechanisms need to be properly attuned to overall organizational aims if they are to function as intended and not subvert organizational goals.

Productivity

One of the motivations for decentralizing an organization is to improve its outcomes. Another, closely-related reason is to reduce its costs. And a third is to improve its efficiency, the ratio of outputs to costs. These potential reasons for decentralization are so closely connected that they will be addressed under the general heading of 'productivity'. Kochen and Deutsch (1980) state simply that service performance is the guiding principle of decentralization (p. 18).

Simon (1957) believes that decisions made at a higher level are more costly because higher administrators are paid more (p. 236). This is a very simple idea and quite compelling when the value of the time of senior executives is considered. If they do not delegate decisions, not only will they be overloaded, but the decisions will cost more just to make. Another cost incurred in a centralized operation is that of presenting information to higher administrators. It takes time and money to transmit information, particularly when persons are not proximate. Simon seems to be assuming that the subordinate has the necessary information to make the decision and really just needs to convince the superordinate of his or her choice. That belief raises the general issue of 'who knows best' about what kinds of decisions. A further cost-related concern of Simon is that

> . . . centralization leaves idle and unused the powerful coordinative capacity of the human nervous system, and substitutes for it an interpersonal coordinative mechanism. (*ibid*, p. 240)

Here the assumption is made that the locus of decision making can be made resident in an individual person. This view suggests that the individual is capable and competent, and that group activity may be less so. Simon provides examples of individual coordination, such as threading a needle or playing a piano. Thus, he raises the potent questions, how much coordination do human beings need? And how costly to operate are large organizations which ignore the potential for individuals to make decisions based on their own expertise?

For Kochen and Deutsch (1980)

> . . . the major 'cost' of decentralization lies in the added effort required of managers to formulate and state objectives for their own tasks and for tasks to be delegated more clearly . . . giving the manager more autonomy, his or her own resources, authority, and so on. (p. 134)

Although this is not a particularly clear statement, it is one which

acknowledges that if more decisions are to be made by managers under decentralization, then there are costs attached to those decision making activities.

Remarkably, Brooke does not allude to productivity, cost reduction, or efficiency when he offers the reasons for decentralization (p. 170). Even more strangely, Mintzberg is silent on these potential motivations. Perhaps these two authors felt that these reasons were such obvious objectives that they could remain unstated. After all, why divisionalize unless one's firm was able to increase its productivity or market share for the same costs, maintain its productivity with decreased costs, or even increase outputs with fewer inputs? What would be the point of greater flexibility or more appropriate coordination if they did not have the potential to increase profits in the private sector or render more efficient service in the public sector? If decentralization is not pursued for its own sake or solely for the interests of organizational members, then such reasons sound plausible.

The Change to Decentralization

A number of authors have addressed the question, 'When do organizations decentralize?' It is possible to view the answers in the form of stages of growth of large-scale corporations, contingency factors which promote decentralization, and the observed cycle of centralization, decentralization and return to centralization.

The Industrial Giants

Chandler (1962) undertook an historical analysis of Du Pont, General Motors, Standard Oil of New Jersey, and Sears, Roebuck and Company who were among the first corporations to decentralize, or more precisely, divisionalize. He gives a summary of the four phases of growth experienced by these firms. Initial expansion and wealth accumulation was followed by more rational use of resources, then by expansion into new market and product lines and later the development of a decentralized shape. This structure was designed to permit adaptation to short and long-term market demands (*ibid*, p. 385). For Chandler, the key factors in the change were the market, the firms' resources, and their entrepreneurial talents (*ibid*, p. 383).

Some of the aims within the move to divisions included the definition of lines of authority, clarification of the line and staff

distinction, specification of responsibility for single individuals (*ibid*, p. 286), stipulation of the divisional degree of autonomy, and clarification of the duties of senior executives in the central and divisional offices (*ibid*, p. 290). It is interesting to note that these are among the same concerns which are faced by schools today (as articulated in chapter 1). Some of these issues are also among the anticipations of those who contemplated the prospect of decentralization in school districts (chapter 1).

Chandler makes his thesis a very simple one: 'Structure follows strategy'. First, strategy is defined as the need to plan and carry out the growth experienced by successful ventures into new markets. Second, the structure is devised to administer the growth (*ibid*, p. 13). The argument is well supported by a considerable amount of historical evidence. A variety of corporations is examined (in addition to the four) and causes and motivations for their structures (divisionalized or not) are examined. This is a very fine inquiry and the reader is encouraged to investigate it further.

It is clear that the contribution by Chandler has influenced the general level of thinking about decentralization. A key question for educators seems to be: Are diversification and its accompanied growth plausible grounds for the divisionalization of education? More specifically, are school districts sufficiently diversified in their missions and suitably large to receive some of the benefits of decentralization which are attributed to the large corporations?

Two authors subsequent to Chandler have attempted to integrate the findings on decentralization reported in the literature. Dressler (1976) and Mintzberg (1979) have explored the same question of when decentralization takes place. Notably, they draw on the work of quite different sets of writers, apart from Chandler who is common to both accounts. While Dressler's synthesis is much more abbreviated than Mintzberg's, the six factors which they include are largely the same for each.

Contingency Factors in the Move to Divisionalize

Stressed by Chandler (1962) and emphasized by Mintzberg (1979, p. 393), market diversity is seen as the main reason why organizations adopt the divisionalized form. Dressler (1976) refers to the same idea as diversification of customers (p. 112) but Mintzberg (1979, p. 395) warns

56?

> AND YET BASED ON CLIENT OR REGIONAL DIVERSIFICATION IN THE ABSENCE OF PRODUCT OR SERVICE DIVERSIFICATION, DIVISIONALIZATION OFTEN TURNS OUT TO BE INCOMPLETE . . . [because] THE HEADQUARTERS IS ENCOURAGED TO CENTRALIZE A GOOD DEAL OF DECISION MAKING AND CONCENTRATE A GOOD DEAL OF SUPPORT SERVICE AT THE CENTER, TO ENSURE COMMON OPERATING STANDARDS FOR ALL THE DIVISIONS.

So market diversification may be of several forms: based on clients, regions, products or services. When school districts are considered, regional diversification is clearly evident when neighbourhoods or catchment areas are used as a basis of organization. Client (student) diversification will vary considerably depending on how it is defined, but the need to individualize instruction would suggest that sub-factor is present among schools. Service diversification is a condition which may have grown considerably in recent years, since the mission of schools has enlarged.

There are also secondary factors which seem relevant to school districts. One of these is a pair of demographic variables. Dressler notes that large size is associated with decentralization, and Mintzberg agrees. He adds that age is associated with decentralization (*ibid*, p. 400), but this fact is not surprising if size and age are positively correlated for organizations.

A second main factor, not mentioned by Mintzberg, is the dependence on a stable outside agent, such as a large purchaser (Dressler, 1976, p. 112) which is more likely to be associated with centralization. Educational institutions would be included in this category, as would all public sector organizations, since they are dependent on the tax rolls for resources. Unfortunately, Dressler does not expand upon this idea, so that the reasons for why this dependence might promote centralization are left unstated. However, if the idea is accepted, then the lack of an external agency may contribute to an organization's incentive to decentralize.

A third important factor is power, not mentioned by Dressler, but emphasized by Mintzberg. While he does not have a general conclusion about the role of power in affecting divisionalization, he notes that changes can reflect moves to increase power of specific persons (1979, p. 402). Also, he states that divisionalization can be a product of fashion, a critical idea treated more extensively in the next section.

These three authors perceive a number of factors which influence the process of divisionalization. The primary motivator is believed to be market diversity — the provision of more products or services or alternatively, expansion to more regions or clients. Among the secondary concepts associated with divisionalization are large size and advanced age, independence from a stable outside agent, and the setting of power in the organization.

The Potential Instability of Divisionalization

The chief aim articulated in Brooke's book is to shed some insights onto the *cycles* of centralization and decentralization observed in many organizations. He says that resources are wasted by such cycles. While good reasons are given for each change, he believes that such cycles can be broken (p. 3). Brooke's answer to the problem of cycles is that decentralization (called autonomy in his book) comes about because of such forces as bureaucracy, predictability, the lack of flexibility, and the paramount status of local needs. The organization reacts later to threats to its vital knowledge and the threat of disaster, and 'autonomy recedes' (p. 181). He posits a 'normal line' or accepted degree of centralization/autonomy for an organization but does not show how such a normalization would be applied.

Mintzberg, when considering divisionalization, articulates the possibility of *recentralization* and comments on what can happen:

> A strong set of forces encourage [sic] the headquarters managers to usurp divisional powers, to centralize certain product-market decisions at headquarters and so defeat the purpose of divisionalization . . . Headquarters managers may believe they can do better; they may be tempted to eliminate duplications . . .; they may simply enjoy exercising the power which is potentially theirs; or they may be lured by new administrative techniques. (p. 419)

His simple conclusion is

> THE PURE DIVISIONALIZED FORM MAY PROVE INHERENTLY UNSTABLE . . . (p. 430)

While he offers an extensive number of reasons for the potential instability, most of these are strictly applicable to corporations. However, the ones stated by Mintzberg, which speak to the centralizing tendencies of the head office, may be highly appropriate to school

districts. The reasons given for increasing central office authority are often quite compelling, and taken collectively, can constitute an overwhelming case for recentralization if the contrary arguments are not considered.

Summary

Many authors' works on the structure of organizations and decentralization have been discussed. Mintzberg's typology was examined and within it, the divisionalized form was found to be highly relevant to decentralization. Two assumptions behind decentralization were seen to be a tolerance for disorder and the belief that important knowledge rests with lower-level organizational units. The dimensions of decentralization found to be most useful were Mintzberg's selective/parallel and vertical/horizontal. Three ideas closely associated with decentralization were explored — the aim of greater flexibility of decision making, the provision for accountability, and the outcome of productivity, broadly defined. Finally, the ways in which organizations decentralize (and sometimes recentralize) were seen as processes of organizational change.

5933

Chapter 3

Rationality and Organizations

Thus far, the discussion on decentralization has been within the framework of what Bolman and Deal (1984) call a rational model of organizations. This rational perspective implies that matters of organizational structure, rules, authority, order, goals and the environment are all key variables in understanding decentralization. However, such concepts are mostly part of what is called traditional organizational theory and that kind of theory has come under attack from a number of sources in recent years. While an extensive examination of the arguments is the worthy subject of books by the best theorists, it seems appropriate that some of the more noteworthy statements be considered and some reasons offered why the traditional approach was taken in this document. Concepts of loose coupling, garbage cans, symbolic systems and metaphors will be contemplated in turn.

Loose Coupling and Garbage Cans

The two concepts of loose coupling and garbage cans represent pivotal ideas in critiques of traditional organizational theory. They are discussed, compared, and their relevance to centralized and decentralized management is noted.

Karl Weick (1976), in a seminal article entitled 'Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems', states that

> . . . the typical coupling mechanisms of authority of office and logic of the task do not operate in educational organizations. (p. 17)

In brief, educational organizations are seen as not being rational; linkages among their parts do not form logical chains where clear

603

divisions of labour, authority, job descriptions, and consistent evaluations exist (p. 1). For factories, deliberate decisions make a difference to organizational successes or failures. In schools, however, the classroom activities are not seen to reflect higher level decisions, but continue under something of their own direction as shown by the remark:

> . . . if we do not find many variables in the teacher's world to be shared in the world of the principal . . . then the principal can be regarded as loosely coupled with the teacher. (p. 3)

Weick mentions other examples and situations where he says loose coupling is evident. These include decentralization (p. 10), delegation of discretion (p. 11), and infrequent inspection of activities within the system (p. 9). How does he describe loose coupling? He sees coupled events as being responsive, but loose coupling is associated with impermanence, dissolvability and tacitness (p. 3).

A number of the functions and dysfunctions of loose coupling offered by Weick include: good and bad outcomes, sensitivity which can produce vulnerability to fad, localized adaptations, novel solutions, breakdowns which do not affect other parts of the organization, more self-determination, and lower coordination costs (pp. 6–8). But use of the concept of loose coupling appears to imply that organizations are tightly coupled in spots. Weick notes that a small number of tight but hidden couplings hold educational organizations together (p. 11). Unfortunately, he does not provide examples of where those hidden corners might be, but he offers certification and client definition as evidence of tight couplings (p. 11). He suggests that

> Parts of some organizations are heavily rationalized but many parts also prove intractable to analysis through rational assumptions. (p. 1)

It would appear that to Weick, organizations have both rational, tightly coupled elements and not-so-rational, loosely coupled parts. Further, the loosely coupled structures could be helpful in the achievement of some goals. Traditional theory is said to be unable to understand the less rational features. Moreover, Weick's examples may be accurate for schools: some of the problems of accountability raised in chapter 1 reflect the possibility that school districts are quite loosely coupled, although Weick does not say they were examined closely for this feature. What does such a characterization imply for district decentralization? Weick lists decentralization as an example of loose coupling (p. 10), but this association would not be strictly correct if decentralization is accompanied by greater accountability. Mintzberg

(1979) appears to think that when divisionalization occurs, a review system is required to monitor divisional productivity (p. 428). Thus, divisionalization with a method of review would be an example of tighter coupling in school districts, particularly if the authority of each role was clarified. However, if divisionalization provided more freedom to schools to set some of their own goals and methods of achieving them with no more than the usual supervision, then the coupling would be loosened further. Divisionalization could result in a change to the coupling — looser in one sense, tighter in another.

Are rational changes to school district coupling possible? Perhaps not. There may be little knowledge about how districts function and, therefore, no apparent ways in which to improve them. This rather pessimistic perspective is supported by March and Olsen (1976), with the introduction of their model of 'garbage can decision making', closely related to the loose coupling concept. They attack the traditional model of decision making used by many analysts and argue that its four assumptions are wrong (p. 15).

First, they suggest that there is no clear connection between the attitudes and beliefs held by a person and that person's behaviour. Second, they do not assume that rational individual action in an organizational context will produce rational organizational action as a result. Third, they assert that the organizational outcomes which come from organizational actions do not produce the environmental responses desired by those in the organization. And fourth, environmental actions do not result in altering individual cognitions and preferences. Thus, there is a pattern which the traditional model assumes but which is broken, or 'loosely coupled', in four places.

Specifically, March and Olsen mention some beliefs made in organizational life which may be quite wrong (p. 19):

> . . . to assume that what appeared to happen did happen . . . to assume that what happened was intended to happen . . . to assume that what happened had to happen.

In other words, what happened was not required to happen, was not intended to happen, and actually what appeared to happen did not happen at all. More concretely, it was not necessary to have a new reading program; it was not intended to have a new reading program; and actually, there was no new reading program established at all. The example of the reading program is phrased in this way so that it illustrates how the model raises potentially interesting questions about organizational changes.

March and Olsen remark that

> . . . the [garbage can] process occurs precisely when the preconditions of more 'rational' choice models are not met. (p. 36)

This statement is consistent with Weick's applications of loose and tight coupling. However, it may be inappropriate to label most decision-making processes in organizations as non-purposive, inconsistent, and irrational. There is no doubt that 'things happen'. There is little doubt that 'things are intended to happen'. And there is also no doubt that from some perspectives they 'had to happen'. To surrender all pursuit of purpose, consistency and rationality of decision-making is to suggest that persons who make decisions are quite incompetent and that organizations are necessarily ineffective as well. Such pessimism may not be justified. If it is not, then it may be possible to 'rationalize' organizations (school districts in particular) so that there is a clearer connection between their ends and their means.

March and Olsen present a loosely coupled view of small-scale decision-making which are seen as largely irrational. Weick offers a similar view of large-scale structure using the loose coupling concept. Decentralization, for Weick, appears quite disorderly and may not even be accompanied by an infrequent inspection system. These views of educational institutions seem to fit some of the observations made about them in chapter 1, but they do not match Mintzberg's divisional form, where the control system was combined with delegation of authority and would seem to have elements of both tight and loose coupling — tighter for accountability and looser for discretionary decision-making.

Organizational Cultures

Bolman and Deal (1984) also provide a critique of traditional organizational theory and offer an alternative perspective along with a typology of models used to understand organizations. According to them, rational systems theorists focus on goals, roles, and technology (p. 2). They state that the rational model is based on four key assumptions: that the organization was created to achieve goals; that the goals, technology, and the environment determine the organizational structure and processes; that behaviour is intentionally rational; that goals, tasks, technology, and structure are primary determinants of behaviour (p. 191). They admit that this perspective is useful in considering organizational design because it focuses on the organization itself to diagnose and solve organizational problems. Not a bad endorsement. But they also indicate that rational assumptions fit well in

organizations with clear goals and well-specified technologies (p. 149). McDonald's restaurants are offered as examples. Schools are not. Bolman and Deal provide a useful typology of 'frameworks', each perspective having a label: structural, human relations, political and symbolic. The reader is referred to Bolman and Deal for a well-articulated statement on each viewpoint. However, there is no question which one they believe deserves special emphasis and that is the symbolic or cultural approach to organizations which deserves a short description here.

The symbolic approach is advanced as an alternative to the three conventional approaches (structural, human relations, and political). Its assumptions are phenomenologically based: the meaning of events are important; events and processes in organizations are often ambiguous and uncertain; such ambiguity and uncertainty undermine rational analysis; as a result of the ambiguity and uncertainty, humans create symbols to resolve confusions, increase predictability, and provide direction. The need for order produces a number of devices which appear to be irrational. They include myths, rituals, storytelling, metaphors, play, and graphics. While not directed to the performance of tasks, the use of symbols can be quite functional:

> Organizational structures and processes then serve as myths, rituals, and ceremonies that promote cohesion inside organizations and bond organizations to their environments. (p. 188)

Further, Bolman and Deal indicate that 'organizations are judged not so much by what they do as by how they appear' (p. 173).

The symbolic or cultural viewpoint offers an additional way of looking at and potentially understanding organizations. It is based upon the meanings people impart to organizational phenomena and the way they respond to the events around them by creating an organizational culture. The concept of culture used is the anthropological one, which is shown by the many examples provided by Bolman and Deal.

For some reason, they do not draw upon the artistic notion of culture, from which many more examples could have been drawn, such as those from the theatre, painting, literature, dance, architecture, music, and sculpture, the major arts. It could be argued that excursions into art forms have a strong contribution to the total organizational culture experienced.

Another shortcoming of their book stems from the way in which it is written. Many claims are made which are stated enthusiastically but appear to be unsubstantiated except in the apparently rich personal experiences of the authors. This problem means that a reader is often

unable to trace the origins of ideas presented and thus their veracity cannot be checked.

More important are some of the difficulties presented by the symbolic perspective itself. As shown by the last quotation, it is largely concerned with appearance as opposed to substance. What one does is less important than how one does it. Focus is on the illusive, delusive, or simply unreal. According to Bolman and Deal, it is less rational, certain, or linear than the other perspectives, particularly the structural one. The cultural view is very *non*-instrumental because it is not concerned with the delivery of a product or service. Nor can it be substantiated that symbolic success leads to instrumental success.

It appears that the symbolic view is a limited one, partly because it ignores basic structural concerns such as the accomplishment of a task — in the case of schools, the task of education. Style may be important, but delivery of the service seems to be critical. Surely organizations which are publicly supported by tax dollars have the obligation to deliver a service. Although schools and districts may have met the personal needs of their employees, experienced high morale, registered high levels of job satisfaction among their members, maintained conflict at a reasonable level, garnered ample political support, adopted a logo, offered a place to work where employees share legends, engaged in humour, play, and taken part in meaningful rituals, *if students are not learning* then perhaps such organizations should be altered. Even when schools do not fit neatly into the simple production model of McDonalds, it may be useful to consider some of the traditional concepts of the structural viewpoint to address perceived problems.

Organizational Images

Gareth Morgan, in his book entitled *Images of Organization* (1986), presents a series of ways organizations may be viewed which he calls metaphors. These frameworks naturally overlap with those of Bolman and Deal, but are extended further. They encompass the organizational metaphors of machine, organism, psychic prison, brain, culture, politics, flux, and domination. Most novel among these perspectives is the brain metaphor, which focusses on organizational learning and the capacities for self-organization (p. 106). Also refreshing is the psychic prison image, which explores the hidden meaning of behaviours rooted in the subconscious mind (p. 228). When the number of images is presented as eight (not fully mutually exclusive) perspectives, it is easy

to ask, why stop at eight? A liberal education should be able to generate many more. But Morgan makes a fine case for the viability of each of his images, a case that is well documented. And his contribution is enhanced considerably with an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each metaphor.

It is useful to look more closely at Morgan's treatment of the machine and organism, since they, when taken together, fit quite well with the structural view of Bolman and Deal and characterize much of Mintzberg's work. Morgan's description of the machine metaphor appears accurate. It is clearly a prescriptive model which is quite incomplete in its characterization of organizations. However, his commentary on it suggests that it has very few positive attributes (p. 34). They include the idea that it works '. . . well only under conditions where machines work well' (p. 34). Such circumstances are said to occur when there are straightforward tasks, the environment is stable, the same product is always produced, the need for precision is high, and when personnel behave rather mechanistically (p. 34).

If the reader finds the positive attributes somewhat disquieting, the negative features leave no doubt where Morgan's opinions lie. He suggests that the machine metaphor has these 'limitations' which are abbreviated from his original text. They can: create forms which have difficulty in adaptation, result in mindless rules, have undesirable consequences when the interests and goals become separated, and have dehumanizing effects on employees (p. 35). For Morgan, the machine model is the runt of the litter and should not have been allowed to survive. The impression received from his analysis is that the metaphor is so limited and deleterious in its consequences that most organizations ought not to consider it seriously. Alternatively, the image of organism is treated more kindly with its corresponding strengths and weaknesses (p. 71).

However, Morgan provides a most useful summary of the machine metaphor's basic concepts and principles (p. 26). Here are seven of them which have been extracted from his list:

1 Unity of command, the 'one boss rule' for each employee.
2 Scalar chain, the line of authority, which runs from superordinate to subordinate from the organization's top to bottom, is clearly specified and unbroken.
3 Span of control, the number of subordinates reporting to one person.
4 Staff and line, staff personnel provide advice only; line personnel are in the 'line of authority'.

5 Division of work, the degree of specialization of roles.
6 Authority and responsibility: these coincide within the same role.
7 Centralization of authority: these can be varied to optimize personnel faculties.

It must be admitted that other concepts and principles have been excluded from this present list. Since the exclusions contain some of the quainter and harsher aspects of the machine metaphor, they are considered to be less useful here.

It would be easy to discard the machine image in light of Morgan's restriction of it to organizations which require mechanical precision, such as surgical wards, aircraft maintenance departments, along with finance offices and courier firms (p. 35). Yet it may be a fairer test of the model for school districts to consider what happens when the concepts and principles of the model are ignored. If the image is a severely limited and misleading one as Morgan suggests, then surely it is quite possible and even advantageous to put aside consideration of it. What happens when the selected concepts and principles of the machine metaphor are disregarded? Let us examine each in turn:

Multiple bosses are possible, and can be quite prevalent. Such a condition exists in school districts when principals are required to respond to the requests of a variety of central office personnel. This condition may *not* provide difficulties if the rules of coordination are clearly worked out. But it seems from the commentaries in chapter 1, that the multiple boss rule may impede the effectiveness of some districts.

The scalar chain is allowed to become a set of multiple chains, which, of course, violates the 'one boss rule'. It is no longer clear, from the perspective of a person low in the hierarchy, who actually has the authority to sanction certain actions. Nor is it clear, from the view of one high in the hierarchy, how to link one's own authority with tasks required to be accomplished at lower levels. Again, the difficulties presented in chapter 1 reflect this condition.

Span of control may be allowed to grow beyond the ability of one role incumbent to supervise persons immediately subordinate to him or her. As a principle, the idea of span of control is not particularly problematic with reference to school districts. However, its violation would cause difficulties and the clarity of who is supervised stands as a problem if the 'multiple boss rule' is permitted.

The staff and line differentiation is ignored so that staff and line roles are well mixed. The outcome is that a request from a person who

is in a position labelled 'staff' may actually be received as an order. The implication is that the scalar chain has been varied and the commentary in chapter 1 would seem to substantiate this assertion.

The specialization of work concept raises the questions of who does what and how many persons serve in specialized roles. The optimal number of coordinators, supervisors and other specialists in a particular school district is most difficult to determine. It is possible that the quality and quantity of services provided may not always fit the needs of the schools.

Authority and responsibility are permitted to separate, so that those with authority may not have the attendant responsibility and those with responsibility may not have the required authority. Such a condition was expressed in chapter 1 with reference to the principal's role, who is responsible for almost all matters within his/her school, but who may not have the authority to act on key matters of personnel or equipment, for example.

Centralizaton, or the degree of it, may not vary greatly across most school districts. This variable could be used in an experiment to determine the effects of a move to decentralize, which may have the potential to 'optimize the faculties of personnel'. If the remarks made in chapter 1 are indicative, the faculties of school personnel may not be optimized if they are not able to control the resources needed to do their jobs. If districts remain centralized, then that problem may persist.

What happens when key concepts and principles of the machine metaphor, more kindly called 'classical management theory' are disregarded? The major outcome is *confusion over authority* in school districts. It is not always obvious who reports to whom, who is enabled to do what, and whose clearance is needed to accomplish whatever. It also appears that staff and line roles are mixed, that authority does not coincide with responsibility, that staff functions are questioned, and that lower level personnel may be capable of making more decisions than now permitted.

Summary

The machine metaphor, or classical management theory, has, with just a small core of selected concepts and principles, provided some grounding for understanding some of the administrative problems faced by school districts. While it is quite possible and potentially useful

to invoke the other images provided by Morgan, along with the perspectives of loose coupling and garbage cans, it appears that classical management theory and the view of the organization as an adaptive organism (as reflected in the work of Mintzberg and others) offers some useful insights into school district management.

Chapter 4

Political Decentralization in Education

There is something of a 'great divide' in the literature on decentralization. One form is strictly organizational, in which the central office may delegate authority to make certain kinds of decisions to specific levels further down the hierarchy. This form is emphasized in chapter 2, where the writings of organizational theorists were examined for insights on how decentralization might be structured and what some of its effects might be, particularly for school districts. This form is most relevant to the present study, since this inquiry into school-based management will, generally, concern itself with how districts may be decentralized administratively. However, there is another way to do it.

The other form in which the centralization/decentralization issue arises is perhaps more widely known among educators. It refers to the way in which decisions are made at the lower levels in large-scale structures. *Political* decentralization implies some form of semi-autonomous local control, perhaps via boards of elected officials. This form is most evident in the presence of local boards of education, but city and municipal councils represent it more generically. Two minor differences between the forms are quite apparent. One is that administrative action can recentralize an organization which is organizationally decentralized. 'What the superintendent giveth, the superintendent can taketh away.' But when the structure is politically decentralized, recentralization would likely call for legislative action. The other difference is the method of accountability of personnel. In the first instance, personnel are accountable to those higher in the organization; in the second, they are more accountable to the persons who elected them.

The general literature on political decentralization is quite extensive and will not be reviewed here. It addresses relations among several levels of government, spans many countries and centuries, and raises

many questions which speak to fundamental values held in free societies. For general reviews of this form of decentralization, see Haider (1971) and Fesler (1965 and 1968). Two sets of authors who have addressed political decentralization in education are Laugo and McLean (1985) and LaNoue and Smith (1973).

The centralization/decentralization issue in education has been focussed chiefly between state or provincial and local levels. Simply stated, what extent should states or provinces, who have constitutional mandates to provide education, offer local control to school boards within their boundaries? Departments of education could retain most decision-making authority, but what would be the effects? Local boards could be given near-autonomy, but what would result? These issues have been extended to include parental freedom and the need for greater control of educational expenditures.

Decentralization at the State or Provincial Level

Charles Benson (1978) offers four studied reasons full-scale political decentralization (with attendant financial decentralization) may *not* be appropriate (p. 135). One is that while educational benefits are realized by the nation as a whole, not all districts are necessarily able (because of diseconomy of small scale) nor willing to provide quality educational programs. This argument is one of quantity as well. It reflects the geographic mobility of the population. Benson's second reason is that the revenues, if gathered locally, would fall more severely on poor persons. Also, state (and provincial) governments could not 'shift resources from richer geographic areas to poorer ones' (p. 138). As Benson notes, this effect would hamper income redistribution. He does not make it clear how much redistribution is optimal nor how much the decentralization in education would affect it, however. The third argument is that departments of education would not be able to control the curriculum, abandoning state or provincial (or national) goals for those of local communities, not seen as trustworthy in their willingness to impart values embraced by society as a whole. Such a concern speaks to the mandate for education. Since states and provinces have been given the mandate, they require the control to implement the general curriculum. Benson's fourth reason is one of vision and expertise to know where future employment of graduates might be, a facility he observes that most local agencies do not have. However, he does not evaluate the success which departments of education have had at maintaining the currency of their curricula.

Benson also presents five arguments for *not centralizing* education completely to departments at the state or provincial level. First are the knowledge of local conditions and flexibility arguments, addressed in chapter 2. Second is a mixed thesis involving both knowledge of student needs and the possible lack of innovation, also considered earlier. Third, he specifies that the knowledge of educational resources, notably teacher competence, is held at the local level. All three of these arguments are essentially knowledge-based, with the addition of flexibility in the first. However, they have already been considered in chapter 2 without invoking the need to decentralize politically. They may be quite attainable under organizational decentralization. Fourth, he adds the idea that

> Some degree of local autonomy in education is consistent with maintaining those types of political freedom we enjoy . . . (p. 141)

The concept of political freedom is an important one, as will be shown when other authors on political decentralization are considered. Benson's final argument is that if education is fully centralized, district innovation would be curbed and therefore fewer resources would be channeled to schools when they fail to compete and offer improved programs. Such an argument is a subtle one but it suggests that mediocrity in output could lead to reductions in resources at the state or provincial levels. Benson observes that the degree of decentralization has been an educational issue for some time. One example is Cille's study of boards in New York State dated 1940.

Benson has taken considerable care to present a clear account of different facets of centralization and decentralization as he sees them. The arguments are well made and worth contemplating. However, two observations could be added. One is that in reviewing the pros and cons of centralization/decentralization in such a balanced fashion, it is very unclear how any policy changes between the two levels might proceed so that the delivery of educational services might be improved. The totality of the arguments presented may be taken as a defense of the status quo.

The other observation which can be made is that many of Benson's ideas, which are applied to relations between departments of education and districts, are as applicable between districts and schools. At that level, under decentralization, spill-over effects become benefits shared by neighbouring school catchments; economies of scale become matters of school size; the income redistribution issue becomes one of allocating resources to schools equitably; control of curricula devolves

to district control of school curricula; future needs and the expertise to predict them become issues between central office and schools. Under centralization, knowledge and flexibility of local administrators becomes the same for school administrators, as does knowledge of student needs and resources, notably teacher competence; political freedom at the local level raises the issue of how governance within schools is carried out; interdistrict competition suggests the possibility of interschool competition to provide program excellence. While these points have been selected from the full set presented by Benson, it appears that they have their counterparts between school district and school, particularly when school districts have state or provincial attributes such as large size, high diversity of population, and considerable geographic dispersion.

Benson's (1978) factors in centralization/decentralization highly relevant to school-based management include the requirement for control, the location of vision and expertise, the possession of local knowledge among the units, the presence or absence of trust in the local units, the requirement that the units have flexibility, the idea that some unit decentralization can promote innovation of value to the whole, and the presence of local needs. Each of these issues was imbedded in the discussion on organizational decentralization. So there is some commonality between the concerns voiced from an economic/financial perspective and an organizational one. However, other issues are raised by Benson. Matters of equity were certainly not issues which emanated from the discussion on organizational decentralization. Freedom was noted as a possible avenue for innovation, but political freedom was not the purview of the organizational theorists. So these two concepts are additions to the issues for discussions about school-based management.

Decentralization for Parental Freedom

Education could be much more decentralized than it is when local school boards are given decision making authority by states or provinces. Instead, parents could simply be asked to choose schools for their children and the schools could be paid according to the number of children in attendance — an idea called a voucher plan.

Background

Milton Friedman (1962) is the best known writer on such an idea. He

starts with the premise that in an economic democracy, the role of government is restricted to 'rule maker and umpire' (p. 25), that is, provider of law and order and provider of services when it is technically efficient (such as with utilities), when there are neighbourhood effects (others are affected, as with pollution and highways), and on 'paternalistic grounds' (pp. 30–3).

His central argument here is one of freedom. The more services the government provides beyond those thought essential, the more societal resources are deployed for those services and the fewer dollars are available for individuals' allocations. As the size of government grows, the economic freedom of the individual diminishes. This outcome is not a problem when individual preferences coincide with governmental expenditures. But when disagreements arise, as they do for almost all governmental decisions, resources are deployed against the will of those in disagreement with the majority. Thus, freedom is curtailed. But, according to Friedman (1962), a minimum amount of schooling is justified via the exception of the neighbourhood effect, where the benefits of basic schooling are shared throughout the society and not just by the recipient.

Another notable source which derives its conclusions from assumptions about freedom is Coons and Sugarman (1978). Unlike the case resting on economic freedom made by Friedman, they ask, who has the best interests of the child at heart, the family or the state? Coons and Sugarman answer this question by applying the criteria of knowledge of the child, caring for the child, and the principle of subsidiarity. Comparing families with educators, they find

> [t]here is no reason to treat as mere sentiment the human perception that children by and large are loved more by their parents than by crossing guards, scoutmasters, welfare workers, and teachers. (p. 56)

Using a good many well-articulated arguments, they try to show that the family has the ability and the responsibility to choose a school for its child.

Voucher Plans

According to Friedman (1962), if a voucher for a year's schooling was provided by the government for each child, then that voucher could be taken to any school, public or private, in exchange for the year's

services. This arrangement would provide a maximum of consumer or parental control and it would also encourage a diversity of schools to be made available instead of the relatively uniform provision of education currently existing. Radical as this suggestion was, Friedman and Friedman (1980) later suggest that the voucher plan would be a 'partial solution' and favour the idea that parents bear the full costs of schooling for their children (p. 161). Apparently, after reconsidering the argument of neighbourhood effects, Friedman no longer believed it justified government provision of schooling and suggested all schools be privately funded.

The result of Coons and Sugarman's deliberations is a recommended variation of the voucher plan in which students select schools, schools pick students, and schools are financed via a complex arrangement called 'family power equalizing' (p. 190). Such complexity is seen as needed partly to overcome foreseen problems, such as racial segregation and program aberrations which could result from a less regulated plan. Although the objections to their plan are quite well anticipated (pp. 133–211), the problems of too little attention to the common aims of schooling remains. Pluralism could lead to segregation and social class differences could be maintained instead of reduced (Levin, 1980, p. 254). Associated costs could also be prohibitive.

Does the idea of voucher plans have some merit? It certainly provides an important option for educational reform. As is noted, the idea can be derived from arguments about economic democracy, and could result in schools which operate as businesses. Or it can be deduced from arguments about political freedom and the centrality of the family, which, if adopted, could make public schools more like private ones. These points of origin have a very common ideological basis, however. Labelled 'liberalism', 'neoconservatism', or just 'the right', they are clearly based on a political philosophy of individualism,

> . . . a world of independent human beings making their own decisions and acting as they think best to satisfy their wants and needs. Everyone has responsibility for him or herself and is meant to make his or her way through life on the basis of his or her own ability or diligence. Any interference with individual human action is a violation of human nature, a tampering with human beings as they are at their best. (Dyke, 1980, p. 71)

What makes Dyke's statement so interesting is not its truth or falsity, but the philosophy of collectivism which he puts in contrast to it:

> . . . the picture of groups of people working together for the mutual achievement of their destiny as human beings . . . [t]he source of all value is the mutual recognition and appreciation of people by one another. People are not isolated individuals but necessarily members of groups. (p. 72)

The view of people as social beings goes much further than this simple statement. It encompasses ideas about the welfare of the entire society and particularly, group rights to justice. The collectivity becomes responsible for individuals, instead of the other way around. As Levin (1980) notes in his reservations about voucher plans, the societal goals of education may be threatened by any change based on the values of individualism.

The foregoing discussion may highlight one of the major problems with educational reforms based upon a strong ideological position, right or left. Although there is always some level of support for the idea, it is open to a strong attack because there is a well-developed set of ideas in complete contrast to it. Anyone who does not favour the proposal has available an arsenal of arguments regarding why its assumptions or its outcomes are wrong. Further, clearly-identified and well-organized groups who support the opposite view can mobilize easily and direct their resources against the proposed reform. There is no pragmatism here, just the clash of ideas.

Friedman's (1962) arguments clearly rotate around the theme of economic democracy. Personal freedom is seen as critical. However, the presence of neighbourhood effects, which are the same as Benson's issue of the spread of benefits and costs, lead to the suggestion that educational vouchers be used. When we ask whose freedom is at stake here, it is clearly that of parents. Thus the ability of parents to choose schools becomes a paramount concern. And it is one which is ignored by the organizational theorists.

Coons and Sugarman (1978) make a similar case for parental choice. Their arguments are based upon the centrality of the family and its capability to 'do best' for its children. The suggestion is a much more elaborate voucher plan than Friedman's. However, the possible effects, such as excessive diversity of program aims and more segregation than at the present time, run contrary to the goals of the opposite ideological perspective and even to the provision of public education. As with Friedman, the importance of the family in educational governance is underscored. But matters of the commonweal and equity are raised again, as they were by Benson.

Decentralization for Educational Control

As has been shown, the proposals for vouchers stem from ideas about freedom and responsibility which come from laissez-faire economics or from a political perspective based on the individual unit, particularly, the family. Yet there is a related framework provided by a group of writers called 'public choice economists', who draw ideas from the sphere of political economy. Their attention spans criticism of how government services are supplied, ways those services might be reformed, and particularly, how schools could be decentralized politically.

Public Choice

Michaelson (1980) offers an overview of public choice theory, drawing upon earlier authors (pp. 208–16). A key concept is allocative efficiency, achieved when it is not possible to improve upon the quality or quantity of the mix of goods and services (p. 209). Not to be confused with technical efficiency, which focuses on production and costs, allocative efficiency is less than optimal if an agency produces the wrong service or too much of a service. How does allocative inefficiency happen in a government bureau? Michaelson summarizes:

> The source of these departures is the relation of bilateral monopoly between the bureau and its sponsor in which the bureau possesses superior bargaining power because of its special access to and control over information about its production processes. Because of the inherent difficulty these circumstances create for setting goals and monitoring performance and because bureaucrats are likely to exploit their position to advance their own interests, bureaucratic decision-making will be marked by pervasive goal displacement. (p. 216)

An example may help to make this logic more specific. The bureau is a school district while the sponsor is seen as a local board and citizenry. Bureaucrats are educational administrators, teachers, and other professionals who have close access and control over information, particularly about resources. Since educational goals are hard to specify and since the performance of personnel is not monitored closely, the board is not able to control the district very well. Perhaps more important, the professional educators are assumed to act in their own self-interest.

The result of these factors is that the goals which the district follows will not be the same as the ones the board and citizenry have for the district. The goals pursued will be ones certain to reflect the interests of the professional personnel. This description is a highly simplified view of how the theory may be applied.

As Michaelson explains, the prime problem here is seen as the separation between ownership and control (p. 214). Owners are members of the public, parents, and board members. Controllers are those who work in school districts. Because the controllers act to serve their private interests or perhaps their own interpretations of the public interest (p. 222), it can be expected that technical inefficiencies are introduced via rising budgets. Allocative inefficiencies, such as programs not wanted by parents, also can result. Self-interest is probably the most important concept in this perspective. Boyd (1982), another author who outlines the position of political economy, makes the self-interest idea starkly clear when he includes a quotation from Perrow, who suggested that human service employees may ask themselves

> [c]an you minimize the personal costs of working in this place; can you manage to make the work fairly light; can you avoid unpleasant duties or clients . . . can you manage to pick up office supplies or food from the kitchen . . .? Can you get your friend or relative a job here? Most important of all, can you be sure of having a job here as long as you need it?

A further analysis of the self-interest of managers is supplied by Hentschke *et al* (1986) who specifies that it is analyzable by considering individual desires (the preference functions which determine individual behaviour) and the individual property rights (those rights over particular sets of resources, notably resources in organizations) (pp. 13–14).

A complete look at managerial self-interest is not provided here. However, the political economy perspective offers some interesting concepts and explanations for behaviour in organizations. Most notable is probably the view that managers are seen as rational beings who try to maximize their own self-interest which does not always coincide with organizational aims. It is easy to add that administrators are also talented and that many are creative. The picture that is painted is close to a 'shark theory of management', which contrasts markedly with the idea that personnel are trustworthy. Rather, they are seen as building empires, defending their respective turfs, and plotting their career paths. Under such conditions, goal displacement and its allocative

inefficiency become likely outcomes. A second important facet of the political economy view is its explanation for enlarging budgets with no accompanying productivity increase. When managers pursue their private objectives and function in an environment in which goals are obscure and personnel evaluation is minimal, it is quite easy to see why technical inefficiencies leading to rising costs result. Organizational monsters are created.

The political economy perspective also presents some of its own difficulties stemming from the emphasis on managerial self-interest. To suggest that educational professionals are really sharks is to disregard any efforts they make to offer the services which their board or citizenry requests. To believe that personnel do not render good service for whatever motivations is to debase their contributions entirely. To overlook the connections made between social contributions and personal benefits is to ignore a major way in which careers are built. To suggest that all managers are strictly rational calculators of their personal costs and benefits in every decision in which they are involved is to overlook many other bases on which decisions are made.

But what is the outcome of pursuing the logic of the theory of public choice? How could districts be changed to counteract the problems of rising costs and resulting wrong qualities and quantities of services? Michaelson's recommendation is that

> . . . control must be wrested from those who manage schools, the current de facto owners, and returned to those who properly own them, the de jure owners. (p. 228)

A related framework for understanding decentralization in education is provided by Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978, pp. 21–36). Rather than use the terminology of economics, they explain there are three key values resident in a free society which impact on the way schools are organized and financed. These may be arranged as 'Garms' triangle'. First is equality of educational opportunity, which can be interpreted as equality of access (where equal amounts of dollars are allocated per pupil), equality of treatment (where resources are allocated depending on pupil needs), or equality of outcome (where resources are deployed so that pupils emerge with the same levels of skills and knowledge). Second is educational efficiency, concerned with the reduction of costs and the prformance of schools, and the relation between costs and performance. Efficiency is also defined as 'maximal consumer satisfaction at minimum costs' (p. 29), close to the idea of allocative efficiency as presented by Michaelson (1980, p. 222). Third is liberty, defined as the freedom to choose, which is the ability to select

from among alternatives (p. 30). Liberty is seen as ensured by governmental responsiveness, but according to Garms, Guthrie and Pierce, responsiveness was

> eroded by school district consolidation and professional management in the interests of efficiency, and by the increased influence of the state government acting in the interest of equality. (p. 43)

The three values presented by Garms, Guthrie and Pierce are clearly not fully compatible, as partly shown by their example above. Emphasis on one often reduces emphasis on the others, as they note throughout their presentation. Yet one may serve another, where an argument for student equality or equity is grounded in his/her ability to participate freely in the society, or where educational efficiency permits more resources for equal access to education than inefficient practices would. Most of the time, however, equality and efficiency seem to be at odds, as noted by Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (p. 27). Graphically, the values form a triangle, where equality is suitably placed on the lower left, efficiency appropriately on the lower right, and liberty at the top, because in many ways, it is paramount. If we are equal without freedom, our condition is worse than being unequal with freedom; if we are efficient without freedom, our fate is worse than if we are free and inefficient.

School Site Management

Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978) propose school site management as a mechanism which could help in gaining student equity, enlarging educational choice, and aiding efficiency (p. 42). School site management is a structure which makes the school clearly the basic unit of management in a school district. Briefly, the proposal has several components: elected parent advisory councils would serve as boards of each school. The individual school council would choose and advise the principal, approve the school site budget, and participate in local collective negotiations. The principal would be a key figure. As manager, he/she would control the hiring and assignment of personnel, be responsible for the budget, and direct the curriculum. Resources would come from the district on a lump-sum basis. The school would respond by assembling a program budget. The state or province's role would be to provide statewide examinations and guide the curriculum. Each school would produce an annual report shared by all and

including student performance on standardized tests, other indicators of school status such as student turnover, school strengths and school problems. Collective negotiations would proceed at the site level only. Parents would have a choice of schools (open boundaries) and hence, schools would compete for students. For a full account of the proposal, see Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (pp. 278–89).

A number of comments may be useful here. One is that the parent advisory council has a good deal of authority. It functions as a miniature district board and is surely not advisory, but controlling. It hires and fires the principal, rules on the principal's decisions to an extent not specified, approves the budget, and negotiates with teachers' representatives. Just what is the council's relationship to the district board is unclear. Another comment is that the principal plays a pivotal role. Hiring, assigning, and firing teachers and staff, formulating the budget, and directing the curriculum become key tasks. Further, the roles of the state or province and district would be reduced correspondingly. Collective bargaining would be decentralized fully. And parental choice of schools would be increased.

The comments may be generalized to two major impressions. One is that the parents have been given much authority in school affairs. This level of authority is coincident with the aim of the political economists to give control to the 'owners' and it seems to provide parents with a greater amount of liberty. How much more efficient schools would be is difficult to say, but if satisfaction is a product of control and involvement, then it should increase. Equality of educational opportunity could be reduced if parental effects were strongly felt. The other major impression is that the proposal is a radical one, in the sense that it suggests major changes in the structure and modus operandi of schools and districts as known today. By proposing that public schools be reshaped in the model of private schools, the idea is not far from that of a voucher plan. The implementation of boards for each school, their level of authority, the reduction in the present roles of the district and state or province, the decentralization of collective negotiations are all significant departures from the ways in which districts are structured and operated now. It is possible that schools may be improved only via major alterations. But it is also likely that changes of this order may not happen because of the magnitude of the alterations required. Perhaps for these reasons, no district in North America known to the author has experimented with this proposal.

Writers such as Michaelson (1980) and Boyd (1982), who draw on the work of political economists, articulate the problems faced by schools and districts: professionals control information, goals are

difficult to specify, personnel assessment is minimal, and most importantly, educators are seen to act in their self-interest. As a consequence, public ownership of schools is separated from the public control of schools. Again, some form of direct parental participation in school governance is logically consistent with the need to counteract the separation of ownership and control and the self-interest of educators. The problem of trust of personnel, particularly of administrators, arises as it did among the organizational theorists. And again, parental freedom is stressed as it was by Friedman and Coons and Sugarman, but this time it is for control.

Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978) provide a framework of values which reflects some of the key concepts articulated thus far. Offered as a triangle, these values are equality (or its larger concept, equity), educational efficiency, and liberty or freedom. While the terms need specification to be applied, the important idea is that they are somewhat incompatible. Again, equality and freedom are not especially relevant concepts among the organizational theorists, although efficiency is considered important. The school site management plan proposed by Garms, Guthrie and Pierce is an intriguing package of ideas. However, a critical question is raised: How much change is required to effect the implementation of the proposal as stated?

Summary

Writers on political decentralization have presented a variety of perspectives relevant to understanding how schools and school districts function. They are also noteworthy for the reforms which they suggest. While the perspectives and reforms are not in the mainstream of the present volume, they offer several concepts and concerns. Some of these are familiar in the context of organizations generally. Yet other ideas were raised which had not been addressed by the organizational theorists. Such concerns, while not unique to schools, require that they be addressed so that school-based management may be understood more completely and honestly.

Chapter 5

Organizational Decentralization in Education

Writers on organizations have examined four important outcomes of decentralization: flexibility, accountability, productivity, and change, each in varying degrees of emphasis. As seen in chapter 1, these are features of decentralization seen as important by those educators anticipating the effects of school-based management. Along with structure, these four outcomes were also found to be very important to persons who work in decentralized districts, as shown in chapters 8 to 12. Prior to considering their reflections, let us examine some important writings which address the four outcomes within the field of education. A look at those which discuss school-based management in particular is added in a separate section.

Flexibility in Education

As interpreted in this volume, the idea of flexibility is used to mean the ability to respond within a reasonable time. However, it can be enlarged to include the notion not just of accommodating immediate needs, but also of taking initiatives, some of which may result in innovations, although they may not be unique or even novel at all. There are a few writers who have addressed the problem of how schools may be made flexible enough so that they can change, or to use a more value-laden term, 'improve'. Some of these writers are considered here.

John Goodlad (1984), writer of *A Place Called School*, addresses flexibility and renewal. His inquiry was based upon the study in depth of thirty-eight schools and 1000 classrooms. Many of his conclusions have a rather despondent ring to them, such as '... schooling is everywhere very much the same' (p. 264) and yet he believes that

83

schools can be altered for the better. His remarks on how schools might be improved are based upon his observations about the more effective schools in his study. Goodlad first considers the viewpoint of parents:

> They would prefer to leave the running of the school to the principal, and the classrooms to teachers and, if possible, to hold them accountable. (p. 273)

He elaborates that most parents believed that the important decisions regarding their own school were made by the superintendent and board. Parents would prefer to have more power shifted to the local site but they do not want to have more authority than the professionals or the board (p. 273). These desires are quite contrary to the assumption, made under the model of political decentralization, that parents would like to make decisions for schools. But they do agree with the interviewees in chapter 1 who expressed their views on parental control. The idea of administrative decentralization seems more supported, where parental input is felt but where control is left to accountable professionals at the school site.

Second, Goodlad observed the desires of principals and teachers, who agreed with the parents that there should be a 'rebalancing of power' (p. 273). This view was articulated strongly by school personnel when they shared the problems they faced in chapter 1. Goodlad states that

> The wish for this kind of shift in power comes through clearly for our sample. It implies the significance of the school as the unit for improvement and those associated with the individual school as the persons to effect change. (p. 274)

Thus Goodlad supports the idea that the school is a viable unit for change. The motivations, abilities, and opportunities for change are seen as resident in the school which is given the authority to make more decisions on site.

A third recommendation from Goodlad specifies aspects of the suggested district-school relationship: He proposes

> . . . [a] genuine decentralization of authority and responsibility to the local school within a framework designed to assure school-to-school equity and a measure of accountability. (p. 275)

He elaborates by saying that the job of the superintendent and board is to monitor the curriculum, provide broad guidelines and consultation, and evaluate plans. In his view, the central office should not be

concerned about precise uniformities among schools, detailed planning, and other school-specific matters (p. 276). Thus the school takes the active planning role, and the board and central office are seen as having an overseer function. Goodlad connects his vision to his study by saying in rather personal and graphic terms,

> I believe that to invoke in these ways the principle of 'every tub on its own bottom', or nearly on its own bottom, would go a long way toward developing schools that *took care of their own business, rectified chronic problems, and communicated effectively with parents — characteristics of the more satisfying schools in our sample. Further, I envision that, in time, those associated with schools would become increasingly creative in designing alternative programs of instruction.* (p. 276, my emphasis)

Here again is the argument, so clearly stated, that the seed to elementary problem fixing and even to substantial innovation lies in permitting sufficient flexibility to make decisions at the school site.

Goodlad's fourth set of recommendations focus prominently on the school itself. He suggests that schools become mostly self-directing and that school personnel develop capabilities for school renewal using the mechanism of a planning group (p. 276 and 278). Particularly,

> The budget of each school should include all costs and alternative plans for the use of funds. Because, even in the domain of allocating the funds spent on teachers, the individual school should be free to exercise some control. (p. 278)

Again, it should be noted that such desires are echoed in chapter 1, where school personnel articulated their wishes to have control over many of the decisions affecting their schools. Such a formula for flexibility of decision-making is proposed, as Goodlad says, to solve problems and promote renewal. The reader is referred to Goodlad (pp. 272–79) for an elaboration of his suggestions. However, it must be remembered that these are not research results. They constitute a body of recommendations which appear logically consistent with the results of his sizeable study but they should not be taken as grounded in fact.

Purkey and Smith (1983) also grapple with the problems of improvement in schools. As a result of their review of the literature on effective schools, they suggest that schools are not strictly hierarchical in nature (p. 441). They equate concepts of traditional organizational theory and lack of change with the imposition of a hierarchical view in which change is imposed from the top (p. 446). Purkey and Smith observe that when improvement *HAS* occurred, it has been one of

collaborative planning and collegial work (p. 442). This model of change is a highly cooperative one within the school, where participation is high and a commitment to innovation and its assessment are evident. Clearly, this is a 'bottom up' approach to change and one which agrees with Goodlad's. But it does not fit with the conclusions of a group of authors who review the limited literature on school improvement.

Clark, Lotto, and Astuto (1984) state that leadership need not emanate solely from schools. In their model, the leadership role of the district administrators is accentuated, along with the importance of the principal's engagement. The commitment and sense of ownership of teachers are developed as the innovation is implemented and supported (p. 52). What their model of change does is to relieve the school of the responsibility for all innovative developments. Both bottom up and top down changes are seen as potentially successful.

Some of the outcomes of the modest literature on school improvement have been considered. It is asserted that parents do not wish to control schools directly and that school personnel want more authority than they have now. If the school is seen as the unit of improvement, both mundane and more creative changes could be effected by more flexible decision-making. The utility of school planning and budgeting is stressed, particularly planning in which the school staff participates. However, writers support both top down and bottom up methods of improvement.

Accountability in Education

The literature on organizational accountability is sparse, but writers who discuss the topic say that some accounting of lower to higher roles is advisable. They also point out that goals may be subverted unless the mechanisms for accountability are well-connected to organizational aims. And they separate the concepts of power and authority. But how is accountability interpreted in education? What are the main kinds of accountability for schools? There is a range of possible answers to these questions.

Maurice Kogan (1986), in his book entitled *Education Accountability: An Analytic Overview*, grapples with the idea of accountability and its attendant concepts. He starts by saying that accountability is seen as a problem in education because the institution is difficult to supervise yet supported by public funds (p. 17). This problem could be expanded

to include the need for internal accountability as well, since even without outside inspection, some level of reporting and monitoring is usually seen as advisable. Kogan offers a definition of accountability to which he adheres:

> . . . a condition in which individual role holders are liable to review and the application of sanctions if their actions fail to satisfy those with whom they are in an accountability relationship. (p. 25)

This definition is noteworthy in three respects. One is its focus on the individual. No mention is made of any possible accountability of a group. Another is that individuals are liable to review. It appears that accountability can exist without actual review. Also, sanctions are interpreted as strictly negative. Inclusion of rewards as positive sanctions is not seen as necessary.

While the concept of authority is not imbedded in the definition, it is closely related: 'Authority is the legitimated right to affect the behaviour of others,' (Kogan, 1986, p. 30). In contrast, Kogan says that power is not a formal matter. His uses of the words 'authority' and 'power' coincide clearly with those of Brooke (1984). A distinction is stipulated between legitimized, formal authority and non-legitimized, informal power. Kogan also defines responsibility, but somewhat problematically as a moral sense of duty to perform appropriately (p. 26). This idea of a 'sense' is part of individual makeup and not part of organizational structure. If Kogan's concept of responsibility is used, then it would not make sense to list responsibilities associated with a role. The idea behind job specifications seems to be what a person is 'responsible for' rather than his or her 'sense of responsibility'.

Based on his discussion of such concepts, Kogan offers three general mechanisms of accountability. The first is public or state control and managerialism, which results in '. . . the managerially accountable school within a local authority . . . legitimated by the electoral process' (p. 40). Here, professionals and administrators are given authority to act. Consultation with the recipients of educational services is common. However, he notes that accountability can be so strongly emphasized that authority and discretion may not be suitably distributed (p. 40). This is a double disadvantage. Accountability can be severe, as shown by Callahan (1962), and it can be very unequally shared among employees.

Kogan's second version of accountability is the professional accountability mechanism which acknowledges

> . . . 'democratic' principles in school in that [the mechanism] recognize[s] the interests of the particular groups of participants involved. (p. 47)

In this arrangement, the professionals, primarily teachers, are seen to be accountable, largely to themselves as a group. Kogan specifies the main difficulty with the mechanism, which is the inability of others who wish to evaluate the school to gain access to evaluations (p. 47).

The consumerist control mechanism stands in contrast to the above two. It has two variations, one based on parental partnership, the other on the free market, where Kogan draws from Coons and Sugarman's (1978) work, discussed in chapter 4. The parental version has as its strength the acknowledgement of the parents' job to share responsibilities for their children's education with the school. However, Kogan notes that the mechanism does not make clear the role relations between teacher and parents or between parents and boards of education. (p. 51)

Kogan then synthesizes the three mechanisms and their variations to what he believes are foundational ideas from which they can be derived. As presented, these two general sets of values become touchstones for many exchanges about accountability and how it might be structured. Here is a brief statement of each: The *liberal democratic* model emanates from the centrality of the individual and his or her rights.

> [I]t accepts that political leaders are legitimized by the ballot box in handing to professionals and administrators the authority to act on behalf of the electorate and client groups. (p. 89)

Further, Kogan states that the model assumes general agreement on the objectives of public policy, consent of the governed, and acceptance that those who are elected may rule (pp. 89–90). The liberal democratic view is one which appears to fit well when school board members are seen as trustees of public education, when teachers and administrators are seen as acting in the service of their boards, and, as Kogan says, when general accord on educational goals prevails.

Kogan's second model, a contrasting one, is called *participatory democratic*. It seeks

> to involve more closely non-elite groups, including clients and recipients of services, and, more contentiously, employees of public organisations, in policy formation and its administration. (p. 89)

Further, Kogan's assessment of the participatory democratic model is that it is associated with pluralism and it sanctions a social order with processes of negotiation (p. 90).

The participatory democratic view seems to apply to the governance of education when it is seen as legitimized through the workings of interest groups, whether they be organized as school board members, administrators, teachers, parents, or others. Such groups, while not always seen as having specific agendas which only serve their own welfare, are seen as having a natural place in processes of consultation and sometimes control.

Kogan suggests that the two models may not be in conflict (p. 89), but it would seem that they are at least partly incompatible. While structures reflecting both of them exist in the same organizations, issues of who is accountable for what naturally emanate from the two views. Different answers result. The implications for decentralization in school districts are quite contingent upon which model prevails.

Along with a definition of accountability and the separation of the concepts of authority and power, Kogan (1986) provides three mechanisms of accountability which are managerial, professional, and the consumerist (the last fits with proposals of political decentralization). Clearly, the managerial mechanism seems to coincide most closely with organizational decentralization. Two grand models are proposed which derive their legitimacy from very different assumptions — the first from the will of the electorate, the second from participation based on pluralism.

Productivity in Education

A main reason for the implementation of organizational decentralization is to improve performance. While writers on organizations do not address productivity extensively, the aims of increasing output or decreasing costs are evident. But is the idea appropriate for schools? The word 'productivity' is associated with the machine model of organizations. It suggests that schools are somehow equated to factories and that the techniques of factory production may be applied to them. Snyder and Anderson (1986) note in their textbook entitled *Managing Productive Schools* that the word 'management' has a similar connotation:

> For some in education, the term 'management' may seem less suited to schools than to factories or to business establishments. Similarly, 'productivity' is more often associated with agricultural or industrial output than with increments of human learning and development. We have found, however, that the concepts embedded in those terms are wholly relevant to schools, which are, after all, goal-oriented human organizations seeking to produce measurable results (academic products) under the influence and direction of designated leaders. (p. xii)

When used in this volume, productivity is a term of convenience, encompassing those related concepts pertaining to effectiveness, efficiency, and its complement, equity. While productivity could be more narrowly defined, it is used in this general way to capture the sense of payoff or potential results of decentralization.

If the comments of Snyder and Anderson are generalized, the ideas of goal-orientation and measureable result seem to fit well with a clearly-defined systems model called a production function, discussed first. Then outputs are seen as connected to inputs less rigidly in the overview of literature on school effectiveness. Next, some of the important writings on school efficiency are presented. The concern for student equity is also addressed. Each of these concepts is considered with a sense of how decentralization and particularly school-based management might impinge on them.

Production Functions

One attempt at understanding educational processes is via production function analysis, which compares measurable educational outputs, learning, to measurable educational inputs, all those factors which contribute to the learning results. Benson (1978) offers a general description of production function studies (pp. 189–93). Outputs are specified as student attainments, such as reading or mathematics achievement scores. Inputs are three-fold. First, family or neighbourhood characteristics such as parental income, education, occupation and wealth are included. Second, student peer characteristics, such as racial composition, kinds of programs attended and rates of transfer are added. Third, school inputs such as pupil-teacher ratio, dollars spent per student, facilities provided and teacher attributes are included. Outputs and inputs are then compared in an equation using a statistical model called multiple regression.

Benson (1978) offers some harsh criticism of the production function studies (p. 196). He says that overall, they only explain about 25 per cent of the student achievement, a low level of successful prediction. Also, the inputs are too closely related to disentangle. For instance, schools with low neighbourhood socioeconomic characteristics may have high student transfer rates and inexperienced teachers. It is not possible to separate out these factors so that they can be examined independently. Benson also says that some of the studies have been 'fishing expeditions' with regard to what factors have been included and that they have suffered from poor quality data (p. 196).

It is difficult to know if such studies are just badly carried out or if they are fundamentally flawed. Another critic offers a negative possibility. Levin (1974) suggests that each individual school may have its own production function, a rather startling idea, because it is so contrary to the emphasis on near-universality characterized by thinking about production functions (pp. 21–2). If Benson and Levin are correct in their assessments of production function studies, it may not be possible to link school outputs to inputs via equations with much success. However, the basic logic seems inescapable: schools are given the job to produce learning and they definitely consume resources while doing so. Students learn somehow, even if each school is different in the way it works and each individual student pursues learning via his or her own production function. But the idea of uniqueness, while always somewhat valid, may be overemphasized. It may be possible that some answers to the question of how schools can be made to increase their outputs lies in the school effectiveness literature, with its attempts to discover general features of schools related to outputs.

School Effectiveness

No attempt will be made to compile the full scope of literature on school effectiveness here. However, it may be useful to consider a few of the authors who have presented reviews so that the general themes may be highlighted. The issues are: what the important inputs into the educational process may be, if those inputs are related to decentralization, and if the body of research on school effectiveness is sufficiently valid. For the purposes of this study, an effective school is one which has a high level of outputs, particularly those pertinent to student learning.

Clark, Lotto, and Astuto (1984) provide one overview and state

that the objective of the school effectiveness movement is to determine if school outcomes are altered by changing resources, processes and structures (p. 42). They mention a cluster of factors which are attributed to more effective schools. Ones which pertain to school management include strong administrative leadership, provision of the resources for learning, building level administrators who 'make a difference' and support the work of teachers, system level administrators who also 'make a difference' and support the work of schools via goals and resources (pp. 47–50).

Sweeny (1982), reviewed eight effectiveness studies relevant to school administration and found that in each of eight studies, leadership behaviours were associated positively with school outcomes. Those behaviours included emphasis on achievement, setting of instructional strategies, provision of an orderly school atmosphere, and frequent evaluation of pupil programs (p. 350).

Another source is Purkey and Smith (1983), who include among their managerial features for an effective school: school-level autonomy, instructional leadership, and district support (p. 443). They also assert

> There is a good deal of common sense to the notion that a school is more likely to have relatively high reading or math scores if the staff agree[s] to emphasize these subjects . . . (p. 439)

A fourth author who presents a look at the school effectiveness literature is Cohen (1983), who specifies that in effective schools, such elements as school goals, objectives, and pupil performance are carefully aligned (p. 29). Further, Cohen asserts

> Agreement on the importance of leadership is nearly universal, but consensus is less general about the behaviour and practices that characterize leadership on a day-to-day basis. (p. 31)

He also includes other school sets of characteristics, such as those relating to effective classroom teaching practices and the presence of shared values and culture in the school.

What are these four reviewers of effective schools literature saying? It appears that they emphasize the principal's leadership, the school planning function, the required support to carry out decisions, and the monitoring of school activity. The authors also list many more features pertinent to effectiveness in classrooms. If their generalizations are correct, then the policy implications are fairly clear: any restructuring of schools and districts which requires more leadership from the

principal, increases the extent of school planning, offers more support for decisions made, and requires that school activity be more closely monitored should make those schools more like effective schools on the administrative dimension.

There are warnings about the certainty of the results derived from the effectiveness studies, however. Some authors have stated the limitations and defects embedded in the research. Cohen (1983) mentions that they have been largely concerned with elementary schools, mostly focused on reading and mathematics, and that many other factors are not considered (p. 22). Purkey and Smith (1983) cover a host of methodological difficulties. It may be that the results of these studies should be considered to be rather tentative and not definitive at all (pp. 430–9).

Another problem with the effectiveness studies is that they rest on the assumption that a set of general factors can be identified — those which will be able to influence student achievement positively. But the present state of educational research may not be able to determine what those global factors are. As stated by Hanushek (1981) who states that neither how children learn or how schools make decisions is adequately understood (p. 37). Spencer and Wiley (1981), in their rejoiner to Hanushek, admit the great difficulty in modelling the relationship between educational goals and resources (p. 51). Still, they believe the problem is solvable.

Where does this leave us? Either the methodological difficulties to date have been so great as to not permit research to provide answers to the question of how schools produce learning, or the problem may actually be one which cannot be solved by using research methods which aim at general knowledge applicable across many schools. Just what are the policy implications of such a dismal dilemma? One answer is to provide the school personnel with sufficient flexibility to deploy resources as they see fit yet hold them accountable for the results. In that way, it is not necessary for districts to know very specifically how teachers and principals 'make their magic' so that children learn. The processes whereby resources are converted to achievements may (necessarily) remain a black box, but if those who inhabit schools are able to produce the results using acceptable methods, then the job is done.

The school effectiveness literature examined has highlighted some important variables that appear connected to organizational decentralization, particularly school-based management. They include the principal's leadership, school planning, support (resources) for decisions, and monitoring. While the validity of the school effectiveness

research is questioned, if school personnel are given flexibility and held accountable, it may not be necessary to have a well-defined model of the educational process.

School Efficiency

This section takes a look at some important works on efficiency and relates them to decentralization. It also addresses the aim of student equity (often seen as complementary to efficiency) and shows how it may be connected to school-based management.

The concept of efficiency is part of the idea of productivity. Outputs are produced and inputs are required. Efficiency speaks to the relationship of outputs to inputs. Callahan's (1962) book entitled *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* is a useful source on the concept. His approach is an historical one which suggests that the pursuit of efficiency in education may be akin to embracing the scientific management theory of Frederick Taylor, whose ideas were popular during 1910–20. According to Callahan, the concern for efficiency among educators during the first quarter of this century was the response of school administrators to demands for efficiency from outside education. It seems that business successes were based on technological advances and credit for them was given to 'modern business methods' (p. 148). Business people apparently introduced and applied principles of scientific management (p. 54) via the production of records and reports (p. 153). According to Callahan, the imposition on education meant that teachers spent much time on meaningless clerical work (p. 178).

Callahan's view of efficiency would suggest that if schools adopt the efficiency aim again, then administrative processes for accountability could degenerate into having to answer for the cost of minutiae devoted to teaching and learning. Mintzberg (1979) would tend to agree with this view, since he believes that small objectives would replace general goals (p. 428). However, a closer look a Callahan may provide some additional insights. He admits to the advisability of applying business methods which are 'appropriate', and considered as simply techniques to provide a better level of education (p. 177). It would seem that some business methods may be reasonable to adopt, even if a preoccupation with efficiency is not. He acknowledges that

> [a] concern about the wise expenditure of funds and the avoidance of waste is as desirable in education as it is in

> business. But a 'wise' expenditure of funds depends on *the outcomes which are expected, or, in business terms, the quality of product desired*. (p. 178, my emphasis)

Here, Callahan seems to be saying that the educators of those earlier years did not focus adequately on the outcomes of education but were preoccupied with the inputs. He clarifies his perspective completely when he says

> It is clear that what administrators sought after 1911 was not efficiency but *economy plus the appearance of efficiency*. (p. 178)

Thus the aim was cost reduction. What Callahan appears to admit is that his book is not about efficiency at all. Rather, it is a work on a severe form of cost accounting, which most persons would say is misplaced in education. It may be that the popular use of the term 'efficiency' among educators has been so closely associated with cost accounting because his book, *which was not about efficiency*, retained that word in its title.

Callahan's concern that efficiency could be misinterpreted as cost accounting and cost reduction remains a valid one. If teachers and administrators are burdened by the need to account for dimes then the goals of education are displaced, as implied by Mintzberg (1979, p. 428). But Callahan did endorse the general concept of efficiency, which is defined by Thomas (1980) as simply '. . . making the best use of scarce resources to achieve given ends' (p. 148). He says that when efficiency is improved, one of three outcomes happens: an increase in goal attainment at the same level of costs; maintenance of goal attainment at reduced costs; or an increase in goal attainment at reduced costs. He notes that efficiency is an important societal value and also that it may not conflict wholly with the need for student equity. This is because the education of low achievement students is dependent on efficient methods (p. 164). Schultz (1982) agrees strongly with Thomas, saying that

> The complementarity between efficiency and equity in elementary and secondary schooling is being overlooked in the quest for equity. An optimum level of efficiency in our big school systems would in all probability contribute more to the cause of equity than any of the many school reforms now being imposed on our schools. (p. 38)

When the term 'efficiency' is used in this volume, the sense that Thomas employs is invoked.

If equity is considered to be the equality of student access to resources, the apparent complementarity of equity and efficiency becomes a critical conceptual and empirical issue. Is it possible to achieve both, when the major assumption which Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978) make is that the values are frequently seen as being mutually exclusive? Could they be attained simultaneously? One way to increase the level of student equity could be to offer approximately the same number of dollars per student to each school. That arrangement could provide a measure of equal access *at the school level*. One way to increase the level of school efficiency could be to give school personnel discretion over resources they require.

Authors who have addressed productivity in education offer a number of conclusions about it. One is that attempts to formalize the relationship between inputs and outputs in education via production functions have failed. However, the logic that inputs are somehow related to outputs persists. Writers on school effectiveness suggest that a number of administrative variables such as leadership, planning, control of school resources, and monitoring are important, though their generalizations are tentative ones. Efficiency was also considered and a concern with it was seen as capable of degenerating into a preoccupation with cost accounting. The complementarity issue of student equity was also raised — if efficiency was stressed it is possible that equality could be reduced.

Change in Educational Organizations

Writers on organizations have investigated the theme of change, particularly change to decentralization, in some depth. They suggest that 'structure follows strategy' — organizations adapt to growth and new environments. They also report that size and age are positive factors in decentralization. However, they note the existence of cycles of centralization/decentralization and observe that there are always strong forces which encourage organizations to recentralize. In contrast, the literature on planned change in education speaks to the way changes are undertaken, regardless of what the change might be. Some of the main factors which influence the process and outcomes of change are discussed in this section. A few, key sources were consulted. They were drawn from a review of the planned change literature undertaken for a dissertation proposal by Lloyd Ozembloski (1987).

As presented by Huberman and Crandall (1982), along with other writers on educational change such as Fullan (1982) and McLaughlin

and Berman (1978), the process of change can be fitted logically into three relatively distinct phases in time order: adoption, implementation, and continuation (pp. 16–22). Briefly, adoption is the phase wherein a decision is made to initiate the change, plans are made, and the organization is prepared. Implementation is the phase wherein the innovation is first put into practice, problems are encountered and addressed, and the innovation becomes more widespread. Continuation is the phase in which the innovation either becomes commonplace and routine or may be discarded, perhaps by attrition.

According to Huberman and Crandall (1982), the three phases are associated with factors working to influence the success or failure of the innovation. Generally, the factors are attributes of: the innovation (content), the institution (context), the community (greater context), and federal, state or provincial educational policies (external factors).

A number of pertinent issues emerge among the factors. One of these issues is the source of the innovation. Is it 'home-grown' or adopted from the outside (Huberman and Crandall, p. 2)? Does it emanate from state policy or from a local school? For decentralization, is it possible to say that the idea came from within the organization, or is its inception easily traceable to an external source? What impact does the source of the idea have on the commitment of personnel to it? One answer is provided by Clark, Lotto, and Astuto (1984) whose literature review of school improvement indicated:

> The commitment of teachers is not a prerequisite to implementation; commitment can be formed through the process of implementation. This recent finding suggests that the decision to adopt lies chiefly in the hands of administrators, and, consequently, early commitment to the innovation is more important for administrators than teachers. (p. 52)

A second issue raised by Huberman and Crandall is the degree of adaptation undergone by an innovation (p. 2). They say that there is some disagreement in the literature as to whether successful innovations are faithfully executed adoptions or if highly adapted practices were inevitable and perhaps even resulted in superior outcomes, as suggested by McLaughlin and Berman (1978). More specifically, when decentralization is proposed, how closely does the idea stay to the form originally suggested? Such fidelity is recommended by Huberman and Crandall (p. viii). To what extent is it adapted to local conditions and desires?

Third, the role of central office personnel has been a concern of those interested in educational change (Huberman and Crandall, p. 3).

Personnel at the district level who displayed knowledge of the content areas of the innovation and had a repertoire of organizational and interpersonal skills were critical actors in the implementation process, according to McLaughlin and Berman (1978) and confirmed by Huberman and Crandall's research (p. viii). They also stress the need for direction in the form of forceful leadership, seen as a strategy to produce sizeable changes.

Another key role in educational change is the principal. The role may be one which influences teachers' views about innovations, but not all research supports the centrality of the principal in the change process (Huberman and Crandall, p. 3). What makes decentralization rather special is that the principal is one of the prime targets for the innovation. It would seem likely that the involvement of principals and their response to the idea of decentralization might prove critical to its implementation success.

A sixth concern that relates to the extent external assistance is provided to aid the implementation process (Huberman and Crandall, 1982, p. 5). This aid can be supplied at different levels, and in the case of decentralization, relates to ideas provided at the central office for planning and resources provided at the school level during the implementation phase. Huberman and Crandall stress that attention to detail and the requirement of resources supporting changes made. They make this blunt statement about assistance:

> Innovations entailing significant practice change live and die by the amount of assistance they receive. (p. viii)

It appears that the source of the change, the extent of its adaptation, the roles played by different levels of personnel, and the assistance given are prime factors in the change process. The tri-phasic theory of planned change, encompassing adoption, implementation and continuation, thus provides a platform from which to ask a number of questions about the process of change to district decentralization. Such questions include the linkage between the source of the innovation and personnel commitment, degree of adaptation of the innovation, the roles of the leadership function, central office personnel, and the principal, and the amount of external assistance received.

Some Sources on School-based Management

A look at the literature on school-based management provides some initial answers to the questions raised by the more general literature on

98

organizations and education. Unfortunately, most available sources on school-based management appear in professional journals as short statements of opinion, either in favour or against. They tend to make general claims for the idea without offering substantiation for those claims, either from the literature or from any systematic research. Data offered as evidence are based usually on one person's observations and there is often no way of supporting their credibility. However, there are a few sources which are either more prominent or more firmly based in research and it is these which are examined to determine what issues are raised, what ideas are invoked, and what evidence is presented to shed light on the phenomenon of school-based management as encountered prior to the present study. Five themes are considered in turn.

The Structure of School-based Management

As a manifestation of decentralization, school-based management has been described by a number of authors. They note its occurrence in several districts in the United States, provide information on the extent of district decentralization, and give some idea how school-based management functions. They also address the role of parents.

Lindelow (1981) offers glimpses of the structure in a variety of districts which have experimented with decentralization. He says explicitly that his report 'presents the case' for school-based management (p. 1). After an initial defense of the concept, Lindelow gives a useful set of 'examples of implementation to date', which are based on one telephone interview to each of several districts who had, by 1981, adopted the idea to some degree.

Comments about Monroe County, Florida, indicate that there are school advisory committees made up of parents, teachers, students, and non-parents who apparently advise but do not control school decision making (p. 21). Principals have the responsibility to hire (and perhaps fire) teachers. The district had seen the number of central office personnel fall from twenty-eight to sixteen in five years. In Alachua County, Florida, 'the number of central office staff was halved' (p. 25). It appears from Lindelow's account that (i) advisory committees do not control the schools; and (ii) the change to school-based management was substantial for some districts, giving considerable authority to principals and resulting in staffing shifts out of the central office.

Another useful source is Greenhalgh's book entitled *School Site Budgeting: Decentralized School Management*, published in 1984. Green-

halgh begins with a sketchy review of some of the background of school-based management but then offers a relatively detailed description of how the idea is adopted. The sources of the data are never revealed, and those omissions make the volume much less helpful than it could have been. However, the book can be regarded as an 'expert's view' of school-based management and for that reason, it is quite likely to be of assistance to any district contemplating the idea.

Greenhalgh makes two sets of statements which relate directly to structure. One concerns what decisions are more logically centralized in a school district, such as closing schools because of weather conditions, specification of district-wide wage scales, matters of compliance with the law, labour agreements, resource entitlements of schools, accounting and reporting, public welfare matters, and the relationships to other governmental agencies (p. 7). While Greenhalgh does not defend these choices for centralized decisions, they appear to be matters in which the district functions as a unit (such as relations with other agencies) and decisions which require an 'umpire' function for schools (for example, resource entitlements).

The other statement on structure made by Greenhalgh relates to how school-based management proceeds in his experience. He says it includes a five-part budgeting process: (i) a district budget target; (ii) determination of non-school site costs, (iii) calculation of per capita allocation of funds to schools, (iv) production of school budgets, and (v) production of an integrated district budget (p. 43). This general process is described in some detail and serves to illustrate the workings of school-based management. Greenhalgh's description, while based on 'expert opinion', shows how the process of school-based management is very much one of cyclic budgeting, an emphasis which characterizes his book. Less attention is paid to the broader managerial issues. And it is not clear just how much authority schools have to manage resources. Are they constrained to supplies and equipment, or do they have discretion over kinds and numbers of personnel?

Another noteworthy source is Marburger's *One school at a time: school based management, a process of change*, published in 1985. While this book offers a few facts about school-based management, its prime purpose appears to be one of advocacy and the expression of enthusiasm for this particular reform. Very little effort is made to weigh positive against negative aspects of the idea. But the book is helpful because of the perspectives it raises. The definition of school-based management given by Marburger is one which explicitly includes shared power with teachers, principals, parents, citizens, and students (p. 26).

The key words in his definition appear to be 'power' and 'parents'. Marburger suggests that under current conditions, superintendents have the most power, teacher organizations somewhat less, the students have the least, and parents and citizens have slightly more than students (p. 12). One way to provide more power to parents and citizens is to have school-based management wherein they occupy an important role in the structure. This is accomplished with a school council (called a site council, an improvement council, a governance council, or a decision-making council) where he says that the principal, teachers, and parents must be involved (p. 27). The recommended make-up of the council is to have half the positions elected from among parents, students, and citizens, the other half elected or selected from among school employees (p. 35). Other features of school-based management, such as a lump-sum allocation to the school are included.

Marburger's strong advocacy of school-based management is noteworthy because it highlights the idea that parents be given a controlling interest in the school and not simply an advisory one. Here is school-based management in the form of political decentralization, as proposed by Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978) and others. While it is not made clear how such controlling councils would be related to the district school board, or just where the lines of authority flow to the principal, they embrace the idea of participation and suggest that this form of grass roots democracy will clearly benefit schools. Interestingly, Guthrie (1986), in an article advocating school-based management, says specifically

> Though they provide important advice and feedback from parents and staff members, school advisory councils *are not crucial* [emphasis added] to school-based management. (p. 307)

It appears that the author of a key proposal of decentralization involving controlling councils has decided that they are no longer necessary to the reform. However, Caldwell (1987) reports that school-based management is being combined with school-site councils in 2200 schools in the State of Victoria, Australia:

> . . . [E]very public school now has a school-site council of parents, teachers and for secondary schools, students. These councils have the power, within a framework of state policies and priorities, to set educational policy for the school, approve the budget, and evaluate the educational program. Principals are now appointed through a local selection process. (p. 18)

Caldwell notes that if financial authority is given to those schools, the new legislation would provide a structure which was fully funded by the state yet largely governed independently by school councils (p. 21). When in place, this example of school-based management in its form of political decentralization would be most worthy of further study.

Writings on the structure of school-based management indicate that considerable authority is given to the principal to make decisions about resource allocations in his or her school. However, the central office may retain authority to make decisions which are less divisible among schools or those requiring an adjudicative function. There appears to be a major planning cycle both for districts and schools. And the issue of the role of school-site councils is raised quite assertively. Are they controlling or advisory?

Flexibility of School-based Management

The literature offers a few insights as to the degree of flexibility attained by districts who have adopted school-based management. Flexibility is discussed initially in terms of the kinds of decisions which are decentralized. Then, as the organizational theorists made a connection between flexibility and initiative, so the association is made between school-based management and school innovation.

Greenhalgh (1984) demonstrates the need for flexibility by quoting an earlier report from the President's Commission on School Finance (1972, pp. 61–2):

> But when a principal wants to send a class of an absent teacher to a zoo or put the class in the auditorium for some special programs, he may find that all he can get for this purpose is the pay allotment for a substitute teacher, when what he needs is a chartered bus or a couple of movies and a projector. The rigidity of such controls of educational practice demonstrates the need for translating alternative resource applications into some freely usable common denominator.

Lindelow (1981) offers some evidence concerning the degree of flexibility of resource allocations within schools. He reports that in Monroe County, each school develops its own budget (p. 19). In Mount Diablo Unified in California, schools budget all items within the teacher contract and state laws. However, in Alachua County, the district controls the pupil-teacher ratios. These few facts suggest that there may be a range of flexibility accorded schools, from wide scope of

decisions, including the number of teachers, down to situations where the district, contracts, and state laws severely constrain the flexibility available.

Greenhalgh (1984) leaves open the possibility that various configurations of personnel time for learning might be built (p. 72). In fact, he asserts that

> The biggest single issue of budgetary planning at the school building level is the number of professional staff members to be employed. (p. 154)

Greenhalgh also seems convinced that the flexibility is provided and that invention and creativity result (p. 184). His reference to creativity is an intriguing one, since it suggests that not only can common problems be solved in obvious ways, but perhaps special problems could be attacked using the talents of school-based personnel. The possibility is quite optimistic but remains based upon expert opinion.

Marschak and Thomason (1976) offer a different view of flexibility in school-base managed districts. They note an important constraint — that California requires a certain pupil-teacher ratio across each grade for each school district (p. 35). Other restrictions are made apparent. They believe that because of state regulations and rules emanating from teachers' organizations, school budget allocation freedom is restricted to small expenditures such as those for aides, equipment, and supplies (p. 36). A rather basic question is implied here. Is the change to school-based management worth the flexibility accorded? Clearly, Marschak and Thomason's skepticism is rare among writers about school-based management. It is refreshing to encounter such criticism.

There appears to be a range of flexibility of decision making accorded schools under school-based management. External constraints may nullify the flexibility that schools have. However, the hope was expressed that schools could solve problems creatively when given some control over resources.

The Accountability of School-based Management

The topic of accountability is not addressed extensively by writers on school-based management. However, some key issues do emerge and are discussed in turn. First is the extent to which performance information is gathered. Second is the effect of accountability. And third is the issue of accountability to parents.

To what extent are schools held accountable under school-based

management? Lindelow (1981) says that in Alachua County, the superintendent and board 'no longer make decisions about how to utilize funds at individual schools' (p. 23). So some role changes are evident. But apart from reviews of school budgets by districts, Lindelow does not mention any general means whereby the performance of schools is usually evaluated. One exception was the Fairfield-Suisun Unified District in California, where staff and community surveys were harnessed.

Greenhalgh (1984) notes that important accountability alternatives are student testing, opinion polls, and other performance indicators (p. 141). He favours the use of evaluations, saying that without them, school program quality would be suspect or unequal (p. 148). He also suggests that when parent advisory councils are formed, they result in meaningful involvement for parents (p. 186). His view of this involvement is highly positive because of the outcomes which he believes transpire. These include a new confidence in budgeting and a reduction in the mistrust of school financial practices (p. 187).

But when parents are considered, accountability has another facet. Rather than reporting solely to the superintendent and board, schools could be held accountable to parents, as is stressed by Marburger (1985, p. 20). He says simply that schools should be directly responsive to the parents. Further, he claims that public confidence increases when parents are involved in the governance of schools to this extent.

Caldwell and Spinks (1988) also incorporate parents into a decision making role in their monograph entitled *The Self-managing School*. They offer a normative model of school planning as a means of achieving school effectiveness. Because 'collaborative school management' incorporates parental and student representation on a governing board for each school and works toward a consensus model of decision making, it may be considered an example of political decentralization. However, the options and extensive guidelines they provide could be most useful for any school which is about to assume its new responsibilities under school-based management. No other source pursues the many aspects of school planning under decentralization as fully as their work does.

Some limitations of the Caldwell and Spinks volume are also noteworthy. They do not address district decentralization: their focus is on the school in a decentralized district. Since they have many suggestions as to how school planning might proceed, it seems fair to raise two concerns about the volume. First, just what is the basis in knowledge from which the model comes? It appears to be two-fold: one is the use of the model as a method of achieving effectiveness in

a case school, described as being isolated, incorporating grades K-10, and having forty-two teachers; the other is the extensive consulting experience of the two authors in working with the model in other schools. Such a knowledge base appears to be rich in extent but poor in documented evidence about the model and its outcomes. Second, the work contains an extensive effort to build a case for the model, along with considerable delineation of its benefits. Yet the authors acknowledge virtually no problems associated with it aside from those which the participants can address with the recommended tactics. Such an emphasis on the positive features of collaborative school management suggests that the authors have accepted the model fully and optimistically, thus leaving the reader to surmise what difficulties might ensue with its adoption.

Role changes seem to result when school-based management is adopted. In addition, different mechanisms for accountability are available to decentralized districts, although they may not always be used. The issue of who is to accountable to whom is raised by a number of authors.

The Productivity of School-based Management

Evidence concerning productivity and its related sub-themes is quite scant in the literature. However, some sources do provide initial inklings as to what the general answers might be. First, the aspect of efficiency is considered (a) as a service increase; and (b) as reduced costs. Next, equality of student access is considered. Third, questions are raised about the costs of administering decentralized schools.

Seward (1976) looked at two California school districts, one decentralized and one not. He reviewed documents and conducted interviews to gain answers to some important questions. Two of these related to the way in which the districts spent their monies for supplies. He found that the decentralized district showed a greater variation in the amount of money spent on school supplies (p. 82). If it can be assumed that school personnel 'know best' how much to spend on supplies relative to other priorities, then Seward's evidence supports the idea that spending in the decentralized district would be more efficient for supplies.

The same efficiency issue is also considered by the Florida Commission (1973). It says that decentralization is likely to provide more services which may match the talents of teachers with the needs of particular students. However, it acknowledges in increase in ad-

ministrative costs (p. 52). The Commission also tackled another facet of efficiency, that of local payment for local services. It asserts that expenditure decisions, when made by people who will be asked to pay the bills, may be less in cost (p. 52). It is important to recall that the Commission's generalizations are based on eight site visits, a review of reports, plus the views of experts.

The Florida Commission also commented on the general problem of equality of educational opportunity and offered a defense of school-based management as a device which could promote such equality. It suggests that without programs tailored to students, dollar equality among students and schools is quite superficial (p. 51). This argument suggests that one way of achieving greater equality of educational opportunity, particularly of disadvantaged students, is to permit school personnel the discretion to allot resources to students as they see fit.

Another topic which has captured the interests of authors writing on school-based management is the cost of administration under centralization or decentralization. Seward (1976) compared the costs of the central business services of his two districts, believing that the decentralized arrangements would require a greater load of work. Conversely, he found that the centralized district had greater costs for its central business services (p. 90). This outcome could have resulted from other differences between the districts, however. Unfortunately, he compared dollar figures and not relative costs of central and school-based services. He did find that resources required for budgeting at the school site in the decentralized district were greater (p. 94). There is no mention of the role of technology at the school level, perhaps because the time the research was done was prior to the widespread use of microcomputers in school administration.

Marschak and Thomason's (1976) paper is mostly devoted to the subject of administrative costs. In a difficult-to-follow discussion on decentralization, they define it as 'more freedom accompanied by more effort devoted to local expertise and less to coordination' (p. 11).

Based upon data from questionnaires and interviews in the same districts as Seward studied, Marschak and Thomason's main point appears to be that decentralization increases the workload because of the more elaborate budgeting process, more effort at curriculum building, more personnel decisions, and a greater need to obtain parents' views (p. 53). Since they appear to have concentrated on the 'burden' (p. 52) of school-based management, they may not have considered where in the decentralized district costs could have been reduced (no interview schedules are provided). However, their point is

a very serious one: the problem of workload could be sizeable if schools do not have additional resources to cope with the local demands of site decision making. In Greenhalgh's (1984) opinion, computer data processing is a considerable aid to school-based management (p. 166). He advocates the use of microcomputers in schools. Such use may be one way to offset the workload problem.

The literature on school-based management suggests that money for supplies may be spent more efficiently and it raises the possibility that decentralization is more likely to permit suitable local expenditures for local purposes. The argument is put forward that some equity of student treatment may be attained. However, it warns that workloads for school personnel may increase.

The Change to School-based Management

Not much evidence is presented on the general problem of implementation of school-based management in the literature. Only two sources present some insights clearly based on facts. One is Lindelow (1981), who provides some examples of the change process. They involve the use of strong leadership, moving principals, pilot programs, resistance by central office personnel and some districts' return to centralized management. The impression gained from reading Lindelow's examples is that the road to implementation is a bumpy one, requiring assertive leadership and sometimes containing switchbacks to a centralized form of management.

The other source is Florida Commission's Report (1978), which gives the weight of its discussion to the problem of change to school-based management. Here are some highlights of the Florida implementation experience, which involved a legislative mandate for districts to spend 80 per cent of their dollars on school sites (p. 24). They are concerned with opposition to the change, district size, preparation for the change, and the idea of province- or state-mandated decentralization.

When the Commission noted reactions to the legislation, it mentioned that state level interest groups such as the School Board Association and the Superintendents' Association were opposed, as were the Florida Education Association, the Florida Teaching Profession, and the statewide parent teachers' association. The Commission says that lack of their involvement partly accounted for their opposition (p. 29). School district responses to the mandate showed wide variation in understanding what school-based management was (p. 30). Super-

intendents, principals, teachers, and parents were not clearly aware of the aims of school-based management or the way it was intended to work.

A hard look was taken at district implementation in Florida. When the Commission investigated small rural districts, the response to school-based management was:

> Small districts do not have the problem of diversity and communication that large districts face, and public access to the schools is direct and adequate. In fact, as one superintendent pointed out, in districts with one or two schools, school based management already exists. (p. 34)

When large districts were investigated, the Broward County experience was noted. Broward moved quickly to school-based management but then found that

> . . . certain conditions must be present for school based management to be successfully implemented. These included full support of both the school board and the superintendent, careful phase in of decentralized budgeting with extensive training for principals in both budgetin[g] and planning, and, importantly, a commitment to the integrity of the school budget, with carryovers retained for school use, not reverted to district use. (pp. 36–37)

As a recommendation, the Commission added that a necessary condition of implementation is acceptance of the principle that school-level personnel have discretion over curriculum design, personnel decisions, and resource allocation in the school (p. 64).

The general lack of knowledge about school-based management was noted when the Commission looked at individual schools. Most principals were positive about the idea but unclear about what it comprised (p. 38). However, where school-based management was adopted, principals favoured it. Teachers, apart from their association representatives, had a very unclear view of school-based management. Parents had 'the most limited knowledge' (p. 41).

Another section of the Commission's Report specifies the implementation problems encountered by district officials. Some of the difficulties include what are called technical problems, such as the lack of skills on the part of principals to manage budgets, the most frequently mentioned reservation. A further difficulty was the need to comply with state and federal laws, district policies, and union con-

tracts (p. 42). This problem speaks to the important question of how much and what to decentralize. A number of superintendents

> said specifically that school based management should not be mandated in all Florida school districts. (p. 44)

Some believed that district variability was too great to justify blanket adoption. The last line of the Commission's section on implementation is perhaps quite telling: '. . . there is no widespread implementation of school based management in Florida' (p. 46).

The change to school-based management appears to be a difficult process with a fair prospect of failure. Many factors appear to affect adoption and implementation, such as the leadership required, speed of the change, opposition to it, district size, level of support, and the extent of preparations. A most critical question seems to be the wisdom of a state or provincial mandate for school-based management.

Summary

What can be said about organizational decentralization in education? One of its chief intended outcomes is flexibility of decision-making. Writers on flexibility in educational organizations advocate the ability of schools to have more authority to control resources. Another potential outcome is accountability, for which the choices offered is a liberal/managerial model or one which is participatory. The third intended outcome is productivity, broken down into decentralization's potential to increase school effectiveness, promote school efficiency of resource use, and provide a greater level of student equity. A fourth outcome, required rather than intended, is the change to decentralization. Authors on planned change in education point to a variety of factors seen to be important for change to be successful.

A modest number of writings on school-based management itself is also included under the topic of organizational decentralization in education. Authors describe school-based management in general terms. They focus on the role of parents, the extent or scope of school authority to make decisions, and the role changes and means of accountability. Productivity issues are also raised. And the change to school-based management per se is seen as somewhat perilous with many factors influencing the process.

Chapter 6

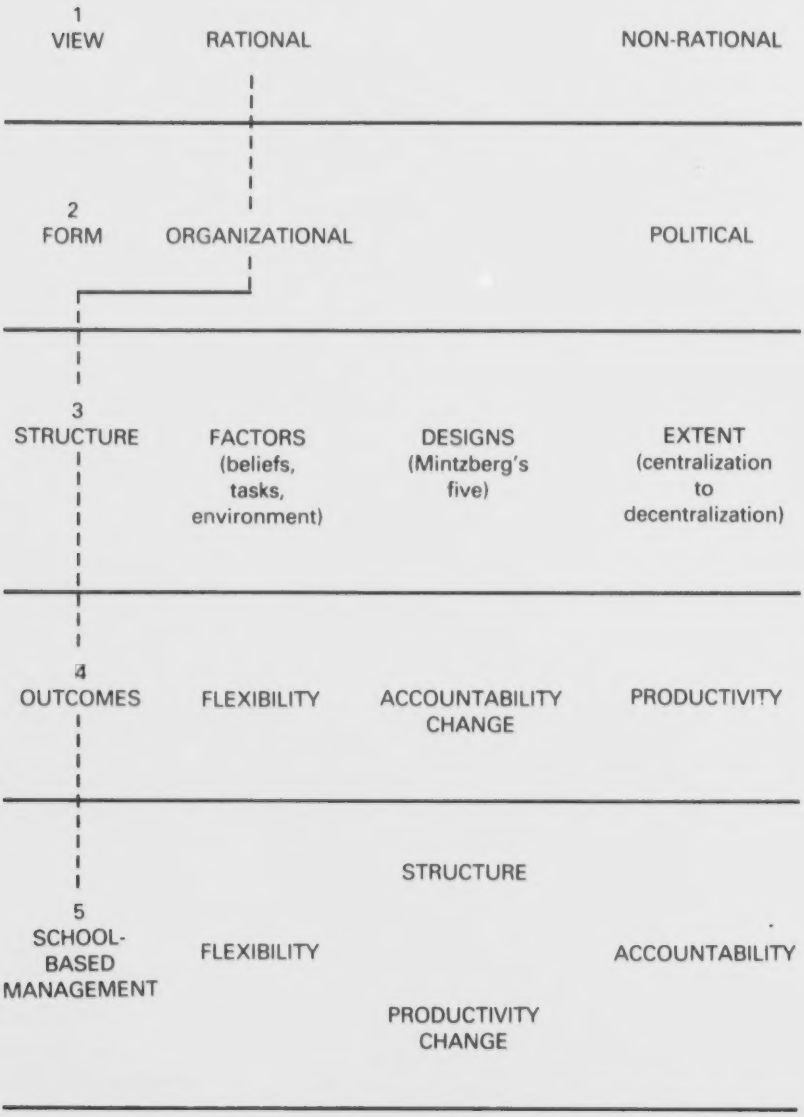
Conceptual Synthesis and Key Questions

A look at the literature relevant to decentralization has revealed a set of interesting concepts associated with it. Many authors have shared their views and findings. They range among those working on organizational theory, those pertinent to political decentralization, and others writing on educational issues. This chapter presents a synthesis of the prior work on decentralization and then looks at particular questions which may be directed at a manifestation of decentralization — school-based management.

Conceptual Synthesis

It is possible to conceive of the literature as having provided a five-tiered model of decentralization (see figure 1). Strata proceed downward from the most to least conceptual generality. The first category contains the question of how the general problem of decentralization is contemplated. While non-rational perspectives such as loose-coupling and metaphors are considered, the view adopted is the rational structural-functional view, with its emphasis on relations among roles, authority, and the locus of decision-making. On the next level, an issue about the very general forms of decentralization arises. These are seen as political, with an emphasis on participation, and organizational, with an emphasis on hierarchical authority. Once the organizational type is selected, then a third set of issues emerges. One of these is the factors which impinge on organizations, such as beliefs about knowledge, tolerance of disorder, tasks to be accomplished, and response to the environment. Another is the choices of organizational design, which in turn address the basic question of the extent of centralization or decentralization, itself an issue of many dimensions.

Figure 1: A Conceptual Synthesis of Decentralization



Note: Connecting line shows path of emphasis in this volume

A fourth level relates to the outcomes of decentralization. Direct outcomes are seen as flexibility, accountability and productivity, in varying amounts and kinds. Change in the organization is also seen as an outcome of the decision to decentralize. The fifth level concerns school-based management, which is conceived as an empirical manifestation of decentralization and draws upon the two prior levels. Major and minor questions addressing it are articulated below.

Key Questions

The writers on organizations and education have spoken, and in so doing, have presented a variety of ideas which have been examined and grouped into five rough categories. While an attempt has been made to keep these classifications from overlapping, it was not possible to make the divisions mutually exclusive. Too many intriguing strands seem to be woven among them. Yet to make sense of school-based management, such a synthesis must be attempted.

The major themes pertinent to school-based management which may be induced from the literature are these:

Structure
Flexibility
Accountability
Productivity
Change

Note that structure is a fundamental idea that envelopes the entire inquiry; flexibility, accountability, and productivity are considered to be effects of school-based management; change is an attendant issue which just cannot be ignored. So there are actually three elemental kinds of questions to be raised in this inquiry, but they are readily broken down into the five key questions.

Structure

What is the structure of school-based management? This question is asked because most fundamentally, school-based management was conceived as a matter of organizational structure. It is not just a recurrent theme, but lays the groundwork for a thorough under-

standing of the idea. It speaks to the way in which school districts may be decentralized and to the processes imbedded in that decentralization.

A number of sub-themes have become apparent from the look at the literature. First is the question of the *form* of school-based management itself. Is it a manifestation of organizational decentralization, wherein authority is delegated administratively? Or is it an example of political decentralization, wherein schools have a controlling group of parents in the role of a neighbourhood school board? The difference between these two forms is so fundamental and has so many implications for other elements of school-based management that it seems appropriate to address it at the start of the inquiry.

A second sub-theme is the question of how well school-based management fits the *divisionalized* form of many modern corporations. Can decentralized school districts be described as organizations with some autonomy with the divisional manager or principal as the key role? Does the district central office exercise circumscribed control such as allocations, monitoring, and replacement of principals?

Third, what are some of the *reasons* expressed when districts adopt school-based management? Do they reflect a tolerance for disorder, the belief that schools are trustworthy and able to manage themselves, and the belief that school personnel have sufficient knowledge to act independently? To what extent do the counterarguments prevail? They involve concerns about disaster, lack of confidence in school personnel, residence of specialized knowledge in the central office, and the need for a focus on district goals and the wider social context.

A fourth sub-theme probes two main *dimensions* of decentralization. One dimension is the locus of authority in the organization. To what extent does school-based management imply vertical decentralization down the district hierarchy? How does it affect the usual level of horizontal decentralization, where authority is shared with specialists at the central office? The other dimension relates to the scope of decisions which are decentralized. Are those kinds of decisions selective, that is, highly restricted to matters such as supplies and equipment, or do they extend to all school personnel, utilities, maintenance, and the use of outside experts?

The last sub-theme addresses the question of how school-based management works in general terms. What kinds of *processes* are evident? How does the allocation system function? Is budgeting a prominent feature? Does such financial planning proceed in an integrated fashion, district-wide and year-round? Are district and school goals integrated?

Flexibility

Does school-based management provide flexibility of decision making? The idea of flexibility is, at heart, quite a simple one. It suggests a certain quality of pliability, a characteristic of being easily bent without breaking, the capability of modification. With reference to decisions made in schools, it is something of a negative notion: it means not rigid.

As used in this volume, flexibility refers to the decision making in schools and not in the central office. What are some of the attendant sub-themes for school-level flexibility? There are three. First, does school-based management increase schools' capacity to *respond* to their local circumstances? Are plans and decisions made with sufficient responsiveness that individual students and groups of students are more likely to be better served? Is the immediate knowledge of local conditions, student needs, and the local resources harnessed?

Second, do educators perceive real changes in the *latitude* of flexibility accorded to schools? Is there some evidence to show how rigidities and uniformities have been reduced? Are schools more adaptive? What is the role of constraints on the level of flexibility accorded?

Third, has the degree of flexibility granted to schools resulted not just in the solution of common problems in straightforward ways, but in attempts to improve schools through creative efforts? Can school personnel identify projects they consider innovative? Do they take *initiatives*? Do they have sufficient resources to engage in experimentation?

Accountability

Does school-based management provide a system of accountability? An idea perceived as good for others but seldom welcomed for ourselves, to be accountable means to answer for one's actions to someone else. Accountability occupies the place of a rather basic value and is reflected in the writings of several of the authors reviewed. What general model of accountability is followed? It is often seen as fundamental to decentralization, a *sine qua non*, where it may not make sense to decentralize unless some means of accountability is put in place. Three large sub-themes attend this rather complex issue.

First, how does the *budgeting* process work? Who takes part in the process of planning? What checks and balances are in place? Can school

budgets be overridden? Is there an extensive process of review and control?

The second question is a more general one. What are the main *role changes* which accompany school-based management? How are the board, superintendent, other central office personnel, principals, teachers, support staff and parents affected? Do boards focus more on policy? Is the authority of central office specialists altered? Does the self-interest view of staff explain behaviour? Another issue speaks to the 'one boss' vs. 'multiple boss' rules. Under school-based management, how are line and staff roles blended or separated? Are those persons responsible for certain tasks given the authority over them? How do the roles of specialists interact with the roles of generalists in the schools? Do principals perceive themselves as having more authority? Is the principals' authority shared with planning groups within the schools? Can it be said that school-based management produces a tighter coupling as far as accountability, authority and responsibility are concerned? Might an impartial observer see schools as irrational, inconsistent, non-purposive despite a change to school-based management?

Third, what measures of *performance* are used? Can school performances be compared? What actions can be taken when results are below expectations?

Productivity

Does school-based management increase the productivity of schools? This theme is something of a 'bottom line' issue. The reason is that unless it can be demonstrated that school-based management provides some advantages in terms of increased results, decreased costs, or both, it is difficult to justify it fundamentally. Three general questions stem from the idea of productivity.

First, is there evidence that *costs* have been reduced? Are some costs, such as those of building maintenance and utilities, decreased? Are hoarding and waiting reduced? Are school personnel more cost-conscious? Alternatively, has decentralization increased some costs because of the planning, decision-making and accounting processes which take place under school-based management? Specifically for schools, are extra clerical staff members needed? Is the contribution of teacher time to the planning process significant? How much has the administrative workload increased? Is it considered a burden by principals? What role does school and district-level technology play? A

sub-issue pertains to student equity, considered a complement of efficiency. Has the level of equality of resources for students increased or decreased? Are inter-school differences magnified? Is it possible that both equity and efficiency are enhanced?

Second, is there evidence that *processes* for increasing productivity are adopted as a result of school-based management? More specifically, from what is known about school effectiveness, do schools provide more of the needed resources for learning? Are resources allocated to tasks as desired by school personnel? Are district resources shifted to schools? Further, has school-based management affected school *efficiency*? Are relationships between inputs and outputs formalized? Is spending for supplies, equipment, and personnel more suited to tasks? Does an emphasis on efficiency result in displacement of other goals, particularly for principals? Do they become technicians?

Third, do schools with school-based management render services which are greater in quality or quantity? Is there evidence that *output* in the form of learning has increased? Do measures of outcomes register a positive change as a result of the institution of school-based management?

Change

How does the change to school-based management come about? 'Success' or 'failure' of an innovation, regardless of its inherent quality, may be contingent on the process by which a district is introduced to it. Guided mostly by the tri-phasic model of adoption, implementation, and continuation, a number of questions can be raised about what factors influence the process of change.

First, how did the idea of school-based management come about? Generally, does 'structure follow strategy?'. Particularly, was school-based management 'invented' within districts, or 'imported' from outside? Closely related to how school-based management came about are the *roles* of various persons who may be critical to the change. Did the superintendent provide the essential leadership for the innovation? What were the roles of the board and central office staff in facilitating the change? Was external assistance brought in? Was there an external mandate?

Second, what was the rate of implementation of school-based management across the district? Were schools adequately *prepared*? How did implementation progress? Were the levels of knowledge

about school-based management and the skills of school personnel considered as the change took place?

Opposition can be a major factor in the implementation processes. A third question is, did provincial level groups impede the change? Was there resistance at the central office level, or from professional or staff associations? How was the change accepted by school personnel? Did the problem of the small district arise?

Fourth, once school-based management had been implemented, how did continuation progress? Is there evidence that districts may *re*centralize? Would personnel favour a return to centralized planning and decision making? What are the main reasons given? How do administrators view the possibility of recentralization?

The literature relevant to decentralization has provided the basis for a conceptual synthesis, five themes and a host of questions about school-based management which are probably worth pondering. In the following chapters, this inquiry will provide some tentative answers to many of these queries which have been raised.

PART III: METHODS OF RESEARCH

This part is devoted to the way in which this inquiry into school-based management was conducted. It provides information on the mostly qualitative orientation of the research, the districts which comprised the sample, the strategy and tactics used in gathering the interview data, how other data sources were harnessed and how the data were analyzed and synthesized into the results and conclusions.

Chapter 7

How the Study Was Conducted

General Orientation

The research method on which this study is largely based is outlined in Guba and Lincoln (1981, pp. 63–81). Called 'naturalistic inquiry', it is one of the ways to seek truth. But as Guba and Lincoln say,

> How does one get at truth? This basic question has engaged epistemologists for many centuries, but it remains unresolved. (p. 53)

They develop a case of contrasts between what they call the scientific and naturalistic paradigms. The scientific paradigm is characterized by a view of reality which is singular, convergent and fragmented; the belief that the inquirer and subject are independent; and the view that truth statements are generalizations of a universal or near-universal form (p. 57). The naturalistic paradigm views reality as multiple and divergent (person-dependent); the inquirer and subject are seen as interrelated; and truth statements are believed to be working hypotheses which focus on differences and not on universalities.

These assumptions underlying naturalistic inquiry are consistent with qualitative research techniques. The assumptions include: discovery of the underlying nature of the general topic, use of categorization as a procedure for making sense of data gathered, maintenance of rigour through improving the probability that findings are credible, testing of credibility with sources, acknowledgement of threats to internal validity, pursuit of consistency of findings, and ways to address the issue of investigator neutrality (pp. 85–127). Notes such as these do not present the naturalistic method in any depth at all. However, they serve to show what some of the elements of the method are. They were applied during the conduct of this inquiry, particularly

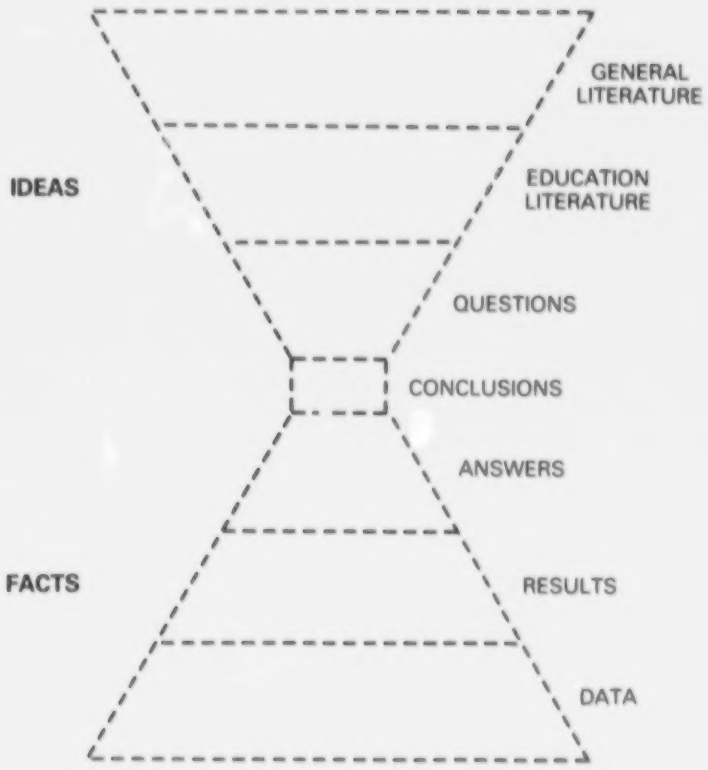
with reference to the ways in which interview data were gathered and compiled.

It would be simple to say that the inquiry in this study was naturalistic, but that would be an insufficient characterization of its method. Because quantitative data were also used, and because the entire structure of the research came as much from the literature as it did from the information gathered; this research must be seen as a composite of both the scientific and naturalistic methods. The overall objective was to arrive at the maximum amount of insight into school-based management within resource limitations. As a consequence, the two general methods were used to build some tentative conclusions about administrative decentralization. Herriott and Firestone (1983) address many of the issues associated with such research (pp. 14–19). Their concern is with multi-site studies which encompass both qualitative and quantitative techniques and they try to balance the need for description with the need for generalization. According to their results, studies frequently blend research methods. Such an effort has been made in the present inquiry, wherein general questions were pursued at the same time as interviewees were encouraged to volunteer information.

It may be useful to consider the particular methodology of this study a bit further through the use of a metaphor. The depiction is one of an hourglass with a broad top and base and a constriction in the middle (see figure 2). Unlike the standard hourglass, the 'sand' is stratified. At the top are writings in the literature of organizations and other academic areas. Next, come readings in education, including educational administration. These are followed by the relatively small number of research questions. At the stricture are the conclusions of the study, stated briefly. In a more highly structured inquiry, they would have been called hypotheses. Below the conclusions come the answers, more elaborate statements of what was found. This stratum also includes those answers relating to specific sources in the literatures mentioned above. Next, the more extensively stated results are located. However, these are still much more concise than the base of facts from which the results are generated. Such facts consist of the particular results reported (such as verbatim quotations) and all the repetitive material on which the results are based.

Such a metaphor has a number of interesting attributes which help to illuminate aspects of this kind of inquiry. One is that the realms of ideas and facts are given independent realities. These realities are seen as equal in import since the top and bottom of the hourglass are the same in volume. This is a quaint, positivist notion to be sure, but its utility

Figure 2: The Hourglass



persists, as demonstrated in this study. Another is that the strata of knowledge are identified both as to extent of generality and as to source. A third is that as the stricture is approached from top or bottom, the contents become more compact, reflecting the greater simplicity of particular ideas or local patterns.

The hourglass metaphor may be helpful in understanding any study. Still, its own limitations are quite apparent. References to grains of sand, while they reflect the multiplicity of pieces, do not show the important vertical connections between strata. Unless logical categories unite the grains, the integrity of the structure is in question. Another

limitation comes from the use of a dynamic metaphor in a static way. Thus far in the description, the sand is not moving. What happens when the model is made a dynamic one? The existence of strata has already suggested that the sand is of different colours, perhaps. If the hourglass is turned over (a common experience for hourglasses), then the factual material in the bottom half may mix with the concepts and models in the top. On the one hand, it seems useful to acknowledge that as any but the most preconceived or wholly open studies progress, such mixing occurs. Learning about a subject is seen as both contemplative and experiential. On the other hand, the infusion of ideas into facts or facts into ideas suggests that they may be confused, and that neither researcher nor reader will be able to separate them or to judge them in light of each other. Until some of these problems can be resolved more completely, it may be safer to remain with the static hourglass model in figure 2 as a way of understanding the structure, if not the process, of an inquiry such as the present one.

Sample Districts

Three sets of school districts were included in the district sample. The primary sample consisted of two 'cases', Edmonton and Langley, from which a great deal of data was drawn. The secondary sample consisted of two rural districts and Cleveland, which also contributed important data. A third sample comprised a set of districts which had not adopted school-based management and from which information was gathered to gain some characterizations of centralized management as discussed in chapter 1.

Primary Districts with School-based Management

The Edmonton Public Schools, referred to as Edmonton in this study, comprise a district of 70,000 students and 3900 teachers (Edmonton, 1986–87). It has 200 schools and a budget of $307.337 million, of which 53 per cent is funded by the Province of Alberta, 10 per cent by a provincial levy on local properties, and 37 per cent by local taxes. The cost per pupil was $4391 in Canadian dollars for 1985–86 (see table 1).

Edmonton is the northernmost major city in North America. It is the capital of the the Province of Alberta and its high latitude makes

Table 1 School District Data

	District				
	Edmonton[1]	*Langley*[2]	*Peace River North*[2]	*Fort Nelson*[2]	*Cleveland*[3]
Enrollment	70,000[4]	14,700[4]	5,207[4]	1,046[4]	73,697[5]
Schools	200	40	24	5	129
Teachers	3,900[4]	748[4]	289[4]	66[4]	4,787[4]
Budget in Millions	307.337[6]	47.142[6]	20.857[6]	4.561[6]	227.880[7]
Cost Per Pupil	4,391[6]	3,409[6]	4,244[6]	4,631[6]	3,092[7]
Private Schools	90[8]	9[9]	7[9]	1[9]	200[8]

Notes: 1 *Source*: Edmonton Public Schools (1986/87)
2 *Source*: Province of British Columbia (1986/87)
3 *Source*: Cleveland Public Schools (1986)
4 Full-time equivalents
5 Total persons
6 Canadian dollars
7 United States dollars
8 *World Book Encyclopedia* (1988)
9 British Columbia Federation of Independent Schools (1988)

it a major transportation centre for Canada's north. A city with few suburbs, Edmonton has a wide range of socioeconomic conditions within its borders. Forty-five per cent of its population have British origins. The city is known as the place where Wayne Gretsky, the ice hockey star, gained fame and also for the West Edmonton Mall, at present the world's largest shopping centre (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988; Canadian Encyclopedia, 1985) (see table 2).

Alberta is the most western of the three Canadian prairie provinces. Its borders include the State of Montana and some of its waters drain into the Missouri River. British Columbia is to the west, with which it shares the Canadian Rockies. Alberta is known for its energy production, particularly oil, and it is estimated to have 350 billion barrels of removable crude. The world's foremost dinosaur museum and Head-Smashed-in Buffalo Jump are located within its borders. The Province is responsible for education but teachers are locally employed by school boards. Private and parochial schools receive some public funds (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988; Canadian Encyclopedia, 1985) (see table 3).

The public school district in Edmonton was chosen for this study on school-based management because it was a district which took considerable leadership in moving to decentralized management in a setting of large size and complexity. Possibilities of school-based management were explored and debated in the early and mid-1970s.

Table 2: City and Town Facts[1]

	City or Town				
	Edmonton	*Langley*	*Fort St. John*	*Fort Nelson*	*Cleveland*
Founded	1795	1829	1793	1800	1796
City Population	532,246[2,4]	44,617[2]	13,891[2]	3,724[2]	573,822[3,4]
Metro Population	657,057[2]	1,268,183[2]	—	—	1,898,825[3]
Area Sq mi.	262	126	—	—	76
Sq km.	679	327	—	—	197
Geography	River Valley on Plains	River Valley in Coastal Mountains	River Valley in Foot-Hills	River Valley on Plains	Plains and Lake Shore
Average Temp					
Winter	8F, −13C	37F, 3C	−1F, −18C	−8F, −22C	27F, − 3C
Summer	63F, 17C	65F, 18C	61F, 16C	61F, 16C	73F, 23C
Economy	Petroleum, Transport	Manufacturing, Agriculture	Petroleum, Agriculture	Forestry, Petroleum	Manufacturing, Trade

Notes: 1 *Sources:* World Book Encyclopedia (1988) and Canadian Encyclopedia (1985)
2 1981 Census
3 1980 Census
4 Estimates for 1988 from *The Market Guide* (1987), Edmonton 695,075; Cleveland 516,468

Table 3: State and Provincial Facts[1]

	Province/State		
	Alberta	*British Columbia*	*Ohio*
Established	1905	1871	1803
Population	2,237,724[2]	2,744,467[2]	10,797,624[3]
Area Sq mi.	251,870	365,900	41,330
Sq km.	652,330	947,800	107,044
Economy	Oil and Gas, Services	Services, Natural Resources	Manufacturing, Trade
Pupils	465,200[4]	529,700[4]	2,088,000[5]
Teachers	25,300[4]	27,700[4]	110,800[5]
Cost Per Pupil	4,100[6]	3,800[6]	2,600[7]

Notes: 1 World Book Encyclopedia (1988)
2 1981 Census
3 1980 Census
4 Public and Private (1983) Statistics Canada
5 Public and Private (1980) U.S. Dept. of Education
6 Public only (1983/84) Statistics Canada
7 Public only (1983) U.S. Dept. of Education

After the decision to adopt school-based management was made, a pilot program was begun in 1976 and lasted until 1980, when the entire district was decentralized. The instance of Edmonton provided the opportunity to investigate decentralization in a large, urban district and also to determine some of the potential effects of school-based management since its full-scale implementation.

Langley is a school district of 14,700 students and 748 teachers (Province of British Columbia, 1986/87). It comprises forty schools and has a budget of $47.142 million, of which 77 per cent is funded by the Province, 21 per cent from local residential taxes, and 2 per cent from other sources. The district's cost per pupil was $3409 for 1985/86 in Canadian dollars (see table 1).

Langley originated as Fort Langley, a special post in the fur trade which later became the first capital of British Columbia. It is located in the southwestern corner of the province in the Fraser River valley. Now suburban, Langley is a mix of town and rural educational settings and is socioeconomically heterogeneous (see table 2). The town is an hour's drive from Vancouver, the third largest city in Canada, a major west coast port. It is known for its natural setting and as the site of the world's fair, Expo '86 (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988; Canadian Encyclopedia, 1985).

British Columbia is Canada's westernmost province. Its neighbours include the American states of Washington, Idaho, Montana and Alaska. A province of coastal mountains and interior plains, it is known for its hydroelectric power. Home to many of the native cultures of the northwest coast, it is the producer of the world's tallest totem pole. It also has a town with the name of '100 Mile House', a legacy from the fur trade. British Columbia has provincial jurisdiction over education and works through local school boards which provide educational services. Private and parochial schools receive some support (see table 3) (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988; Canadian Encyclopedia, 1985).

Langley was chosen for inclusion because it provided some important contrasts to Edmonton. As a medium-sized suburban district, it may resemble a great many others across North America. It was not required to 'break as much new ground' as Edmonton was because the experience gained in Edmonton was applied. A somewhat less complex setting, Langley is also located in a different provincial jurisdiction, and those factors were taken into account. Initial investigations into school-based management took place in the early 1980s. After the decision to adopt, pilot schools experimented with decentralization in 1984/85 and the district implemented it completely in 1985/86.

Secondary Districts with School-based Management

A smaller amount of data was collected from two rural districts in British Columbia which were adopting school-based management. One of these was Peace River North, which consists of 5207 students, 289 teachers, and twenty-four schools. It has an operating budget of $20.857 million (Province of British Columbia, 1986/87) (see table 1). Fort St. John is the main town in the district. It is located on the other side of the Rocky Mountains from Vancouver; the closest major city is Edmonton. Fort St. John is part of the oil-producing region and is the site of Northern Lights Community College (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988; Canadian Encyclopedia, 1985) (see table 2).

The other rural district was Fort Nelson where there are 1046 students, sixty-six teachers, and five schools. The operating budget was $4.561 million (Province of British Columbia, 1986/87) (see table 1). Located in the northeast corner of British Columbia in a prairie setting, Fort Nelson originated in the fur-trading days. Incorporated as a town in 1971, its main industries are forestry and petroleum. A long distance north from Vancouver and near the 59th parallel of latitude, it is close to the limit of discontinuous permafrost (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988; Canadian Encyclopedia, 1985) (see table 2).

Both these rural districts were included because they serve to broaden the base of data gathered beyond the urban and suburban. Their sizes were small in population but large in geographic terms and because of these characteristics, the problems of administration are different from those encountered in other districts.

Two superintendents from other small-enrollment rural districts were interviewed for this study. Their districts are both in British Columbia. One was Nelson (not Fort Nelson), with 3428 students and 209 teachers. The other was Peace River South (not Peace River North), with 5665 students and 316 teachers. Because they also had some district-based experience with decentralization, their insights were used to broaden the foundation of data gathered. However, their contributions are not considered to be 'cases' in any sense.

Cleveland was another district from which a modest amount of data was gleaned. The school district within the city of Cleveland has an enrollment of 73,697, similar to Edmonton's. It employs 4784 teachers in 129 schools. For 1986, the budget was $227.880 million in U.S. dollars (see table 1).

Located in the northern part of the state, Cleveland is the largest city in Ohio. Known as a major port on the St. Lawrence seaway and as a manufacturing centre, it has the geographic shape of a Scottish

Terrier. Black people make up 45 per cent of the population of the city proper. Cleveland is known for its invention of the first electric traffic signal in 1914 and for the Cleveland Orchestra at Severence Hall (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988) (see table 2).

Ohio is situated across Lake Erie from southwestern Ontario. Much of the state is plains and foothills. It is known for its manufacturing and for the discovery of the oldest known watercraft in North America — a dugout canoe. The first public weather forecasting service was initiated there. Also, Ohio claims the title 'Mother of Presidents', having sent six to the White House. While the State of Ohio has responsibility for public education, the federal government occupies a prominent role in the support of various programs. Private and parochial schools are not supported with public funds (World Book Encyclopedia, 1988) (see table 3).

The inclusion of Cleveland in this inquiry was very important for a number of reasons. First, Cleveland was required to adopt decentralization by a court order, while the other districts adopted voluntarily. Second, during the period of this study, decentralization in Cleveland was restricted effectively to supplies and equipment decisions. The other districts permitted schools to make personnel decisions. The third consideration was its jurisdictional setting. It is affected by the strong federal government presence in education which is not felt in Canada. Fourth, Cleveland had experienced a number of successions of superintendents, a factor which could influence the adoption of any administrative change.

Districts with Centralized Management

As a counterpoint to the concentration of interviews in school districts with school-based management, five districts with traditional decision-making structures were included in this study. They consisted of one suburban and four rural districts in British Columbia. The suburban district had a student enrollment between 80,000 and 110,000 with a teaching force between 1500 and 1800. Its budget was between $90 million and $120 million in Canadian dollars during 1986/87. In the four rural districts, enrollments ranged from 3000 to 8000; their teachers spanned 150 to 480, and their budgets ranged from $10 million to $30 million in approximate figures (Province of British Columbia, 1986/87). Their identities have been withheld to avoid any implied criticism of them. It was considered important to include them because they may reflect the concerns of administrators who work under

conditions which may be typical of many districts across North America. However, the results from interviews conducted with them did not reflect actual experience with decentralization. As a consequence, the information gathered from them was mainly concerned with decision making in their own schools and districts and how they anticipated the impact of school-based management if it was adopted. Results from those interviews are located in chapter 1.

Interview Strategy

Interviews were planned in accordance with the guidelines provided by Gorden (1987), who defends their use in this way:

> Interviewing is most valuable when we are interested in knowing people's beliefs, attitudes, values, knowledge, or any other subjective orientations or mental content. Whether this knowledge is more valuable than [that of] the questionnaire depends on the degree to which we know exactly what we want and what the possible range of answers might be. (p. 11)

Since some questionnaire data were already available (see Alexandruk, 1985), and since the 'right questions' were not fully assured, interviews were chosen as a main method for gathering data.

Information was collected from the aforementioned districts in the following way: after permission had been given to conduct interviews, the interviewers selected a sample of persons. That selection was made usually with the assistance of a contact person in each district. Superintendents or their designates were given the opportunity of suggesting a list of respondents, a courtesy extended when practicable because some of the subject matter could have included potentially sensitive topics. Most did not bother to name respondents. However, when suggestions were made, interviewers were not restrained and did not feel constrained in the selection of persons from whom to gather information. When request for permission was seen to be inappropriate, as in the case of a person who had left Edmonton, it was not sought.

The prime criteria for selection were the extent of knowledge and experience which a prospective respondent had with some aspect of school-based management, as well as that person's ability to reflect on those experiences. Sampling was clearly purposive and the sample makeup was extended or amended according to information provided by the initial interviewees. Because decentralization was conceived as a

change in the organizational structure, most of the interviewees were administrators, though other roles were also represented. The breakdown of interviewee roles by district is also presented in table 4.

Edmonton: twenty persons, including the Superintendent, central office personnel, principals, vice-principals, teachers, school staff persons and an Alberta Teachers' Association officer. *Langley*: twenty-seven persons, the Superintendent, central office personnel, principals, teachers, school staff persons and the Langley Teachers' Association representative. *Peace River North*: ten persons, including the Superintendent, board members and principals. *Fort Nelson*: five persons, including the Superintendent. *Nelson and Peace River South*: one superintendent each. *Cleveland*: six persons, an Associate Superintendent, central office personnel and principals. A total of seventy persons were interviewed in decentralized districts. Among the five districts which had not adopted school-based management, there were forty interviews conducted in all, with a range of four to twelve in each.

The interview schedules were based upon a general one designed for the project as a whole. Each was altered according to the following factors: the district being studied, anticipated interviewee knowledge and experience regarding decentralization and new insights gained from previous interviews. Interviewees were instructed to proceed until redundancies in responses were evident. However, limited resources did not always permit 'saturation' of ideas presented. When this was anticipated, interviewers concentrated on main topics and reduced emphasis on secondary ones by selecting remaining interviewees so that key ideas could be tested for confirmation or refutation.

An additional source of data was a three-day conference held by Edmonton on school-based management. An extensive amount of information was presented via lectures and question-and-answer format. Data were recorded in note form, compiled and returned to the presenters with the request that it be checked for accuracy of facts and interpretations. Most presenters responded and some provided additional information and reflections.

Interview Tactics

Objectives and conditions of the interview were explained to the subjects at the start. Anonymity was assured for all but chief executive officers. The time taken was approximately one hour but much longer in some cases. Notes were written; tape recorders were not used because of the potential sensitivities of the interviewees. Schedules were

Table 4: Numbers of Interviewees by School District

Edmonton	20	
Langley	27	
Peace River North	10	
Fort Nelson	5	
Nelson	1	
Peace River South	1	
Cleveland	6	
Subtotal — Districts with School-based Management		70
Centralized Districts		44
Total		114

semi-structured, that is, the order of questions was not rigid; subjects were encouraged to explore some topics in greater depth; facts were requested; verbatim quotations were recorded in writing; not all topics on the schedule were necessarily covered. Toward the end of each interview, the interviewee was usually asked for any responses he or she thought might be useful yet had not been addressed. This invitation provided the opportunity to volunteer potentially important ideas which the interviewer had not anticipated. All interviews were face-to-face except three which were conducted by telephone using the same format.

It was the opinion of the interviewers that virtually all subjects were highly cooperative and straightforward in their responses to questions, some of which required reflective answers. Points of criticism of school-based management appeared to be freely offered, giving interviewers the impression that most subjects participated capably, willingly and with no desire to withhold relevant information about their school or district. The ability and willingness of the subjects to work in a professional and detached manner on all issues (sometimes sensitive ones), was appreciated greatly by all the interviewers. For most of the subjects, a copy of the interviewer's notes was returned for a check on their accuracy. Subjects appeared to respond well to this opportunity to correct any factual errors or misinterpretations.

Other Data Sources

The districts on which this study is based were asked for whatever documentation they could provide which would be pertinent to school-based management. Edmonton offered a compendium (Edmonton Experience II, 1986), which contained descriptions of district

structure and survey results. Budgetary documentation and the more extensive survey reports of Palmer and Mosychuk (1983) were freely given. Langley offered its handbook on decentralization as did Peace River North. Cleveland provided an extensive set of memoranda and other background information on decentralization. In all cases, contact persons expressed their willingness to assist the study and dig up data. One source which was not requested was board minutes; the scope of this inquiry did not require them. Another source of information not used was student achievement test data. Such data were not available for Edmonton; for the other districts, it was considered the school-based management had not been implemented long enough to make an examination of them valid.

Fortunately, this inquiry was able to rely on the work of others who had investigated some relevant part of decentralization. Such studies were integrated into the results of the present one because they were undertaken in Edmonton when school-based management was in effect. Most notable was Alexandruk (1985) who surveyed a sample of Edmonton teachers and principals and received broad set of reactions on decentralization from them. His study served to complement the interviews done in this inquiry and was used extensively in the results. Another important work was Young's (1984), which focussed on teacher participation in decision-making in Edmonton schools. While her research methods were similar to the ones in this inquiry, her results added insights into critical aspects of school-based management, particularly for teachers.

Project Supervision

A few words about the interviewers seem appropriate here. Each district had one interviewer, except for Langley, which had two. The individual who gathered the information in Edmonton and Cleveland was one who had a fair amount of experience at conducting interviews and undertaking administrative research. Those who worked in Langley and the rural districts were students at the end of their masters programs in educational administration, the sixth year of their university education. Some were principals; others were teachers aspiring to a career in school administration. Except for one who obtained course credit for an extensive paper, the remaining six undertook the interviewing task as part of their masters degree papers which were shared subsequently with administrators in their respective districts.

As was noted, interviewers for several of the districts, including those with centralized management, conducted their research papers under the supervision of the chief investigator. Each was required to write a short literature review on school-based management, to develop research questions, to write a few pages about the research method they were about to use and to produce a variation on the main interview schedule. When those had been checked by the chief investigator, permission to proceed with the interviews was secured in the respective districts. On completion of the interviews and receipt of the returned notes from interviewees, the notes were analyzed and interviewers synthesized their results and presented their conclusions. The papers were then examined in detail by the chief investigator and extensive suggestions and criticisms made, ranging from the specificity of the results to the integrity of the conclusions. Both of these were deemed most important because the validity of the work depended on them. Once each paper had attained the level of quality acceptable to the chief investigator, its final form was presented and the student graduated. A number of the students endorsed the experience as one which fostered the development of considerable knowledge and skills.

Analysis of Data

The method of data collection and analysis was similar to that outlined by Miles and Huberman (1984, pp. 21–3), but with some important differences. Most notable of these was that the small number of interviews did not require the extensive tabulation of the results because the data were limited in kind and quantity. Analysis was less elaborate than Miles and Huberman's specifications for that reason. Another simplifying feature was that interview subjects were usually administrators and the interviewers themselves were students of educational administration. As a consequence, there were elements of a common language which the two could share. One result was that many respondents could provide useful interpretations for the facts as they found them and these interpretations could be tested in other interviews. A third variation from Miles and Huberman was the mix of data sources used. By working with a variety of kinds of data (interview results, surveys, and documents), interview generalizations could be tested for validity, at least tentatively, with interpretations from the available documents, presentation notes, and closely-related research.

Apart from the above variations, data analysis was carried out

according to Miles and Huberman's steps of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. Data reduction proceeded by having the student investigators compile and interpret their results under the supervision of the chief investigator. In turn, the chief investigator compiled his interview data (for which an outliner was used), student research reports, documents, survey results, and other research findings. The data were displayed by initial groups which reflected main topics. These themes were then checked with those in the literature, which was updated and realigned with them. As a consequence, the structure of this volume reflects both the prior conceptualizations in the literature and the subsequent topics induced from the data, which were generated mainly from the interviews. Data were regrouped into the five major themes of structure, flexibility, accountability, productivity and change, as reflected in the research questions developed. During the conclusion drawing/verification phase, data on each theme were examined for validity and stability. Conclusions were specified and interpretations made on the basis of the strength of the themes in the data.

Summary

The general orientation which guided this study was that of qualitative research temperered with the use of some quantitative data. An hourglass model showing the interaction of ideas and data was presented. Background information was given for the five districts in which interviews were conducted and other data gathered. Interview strategy, reflecting purposive sampling, was discussed, along with interview tactics. Other aspects of the inquiry were noted, such as the use of non-interview data, some information on interviews and the way the inquiry was supervised, and an indication how the data were analyzed and synthesized. Now, let those who have experienced decentralization speak!

PART IV: RESULTS

This part discusses the answers to the preceding questions about the structure, provision of flexibility, extent of accountability, resultant productivity and change process of decentralization in school districts. While the contents of some of these themes overlap, particularly that of structure with the others, each topic is intended to offer insights that were seen as highly relevant to school-based management by interviewees, authors or both.

Chapter 8

What is the Structure of School-based Management?

This chapter describes and interprets some of the results pertaining to the structure of school-based management as encountered in the districts studied. It proceeds by presenting the answer to the question of whether school-based management is a form of political or organizational decentralization. Focus is then directed to the way in which the districts are divisionalized by school. Intentions, which reflect district beliefs about knowledge and tolerance for disorder are then examined. Main dimensions of decentralization as seen by interviewees are presented. These include where authority and responsibility lie and the scope or extent of decisions made by schools. Two key processes in school-based management, allocations and budgeting, are then outlined.

General Form

The question of the fundamental form which school-based management takes is easy to answer at its most general level. When the political decentralization model proposed by Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978) was reviewed, it was found to contain elements such as school-site collective bargaining and school-site parent committees which have responsibility for directing school policy and hiring or firing the principal. These critical (perhaps even drastic) features are absent in school-based management as encountered in this study. Clearly, the decentralization in the districts included here is based upon the willingness of their boards and central administrations to permit schools to make many critical decisions. The school-based management has come about administratively. As such, the structures are organizational, and not political whereby community groups are given control of school policy. The following sections support this assertion.

Divisionalization

A corollary to the basic structural question is the extent to which decentralization has taken place in the districts. One simple indicator is the percentage of the operating budget which is allocated on a lump-sum basis to schools. According to Edmonton (1986/87), the figure is 75 per cent. The corresponding percentage in Langley is 85 per cent (from interviews). These sizeable percentages indicate that personnel are included in the allocations. This is a critical point, because principals across North America have always had some measure of 'school-based management' in the form of allocations for supplies. And under such conditions, it is easy to claim that any district 'has school-based management'.

A second answer to the divisionalization question may be provided by the way in which the districts define school-based management. Edmonton (1986) makes a general statement:

> School centred administration is a process in which school-based decisions and actions aimed at achieving specified results at the schools are made by the staff in the schools. (p. 42)

It should be noted that the reference to 'staff' normally applies to faculty and support staff. This definition appears to fit well with Mintzberg's (1979) concept of the divisionalized form, in which the managers of significantly-sized units, called divisions in the corporate world, are given prime planning and decision-making authority and responsibility (p. 380). The assumption behind this definition is that the persons with the major responsibility for the welfare of students are parents, school board members, and school personnel (Strembitsky, 1986). A less-frequently mentioned assumption is that school personnel can be trusted to manage money and have the competence to set local educational priorities (Strembitsky interview).

Langley's (1984) definition for school-based management is straightforward:

> Decentralized decision-making is an educational process which is designed to allow the most significant decisions and actions aimed at achieving specified results at the schools, to be made at the school . . . The essence of decentralization is that there is a marked shift of decision-making responsibility from central office to the individual school. (p. 1)

Focus on the school as a locus of decision-making is very clear. While the scope of decisions is not specified, there is no question that

school-level matters are to be addressed by the school. Consequently, it can be said that the districts are divisionalized.

District Intentions

The ways in which districts articulate their aims for school-based management reflect both their tolerance for disorder and their views on 'who knows best' about school-level affairs. Such aims provide some idea why the structure might be adopted. They appear to be based on two important maxims. One is that the 'dollar follows the child' (Strembitsky interview). Another is that the district attempts to be 'fair and equitable versus fair and equal' (senior Edmonton administrator). Such principles raise the equality issues which are discussed in chapter 11 on productivity. They appear to represent Edmonton's way of ensuring some degree of fairness in allocation but acknowledging variations in resulting expenditures.

Langley's (1984) goals for district decentralization per se are explicitly put forward:

1. To provide principals and teachers with an appropriate and effective role in the decision-making process in education.
2. To provide a decision-making mechanism which is responsive to the needs of students.
3. To develop a valid system of accountability.
4. To ensure the effectiveness of the expenditure of the educational dollar.
5. To give the budget/planning process a direct educational focus. (p. 1)

The first aim emphasizes the role of principals and teachers, an idea that can be inferred from a foregoing statement that 'decisions and actions . . . be made at the school'. As for the second, a key word is responsive, one which is closely associated with decentralization (Kochen and Deutsch, 1980) whether organizational or political (p. 11). In this context, the intention appears to be to give schools the authority to be responsive to student needs as perceived by school staffs. The next item emphasizes accountability. This concept is a cornerstone of divisionalization (Mintzberg, 1979, p. 428). The fourth aim is to achieve effectiveness of dollars expended, which seems to be close to the concept of efficiency as used by Thomas (1980, p. 148). The fifth

goal affirms the idea that planning (and priorities) are to be integrated with educational aims, a concern raised by Goodlad (1984).

There is no comparable set of goals for school-based management which could be found for Edmonton. Instead, the general goals of the district, which are not reproduced here, have the intentions of decentralization built into them (Edmonton, 1986, pp. 47–9).

Some of the aims of school-based management in Cleveland are provided by the document designed for the use of school community councils (Cleveland, 1986, p. 1). Three of these goals are:

> [School-based management] enables the principal, staff and community to channel the available resources toward the schools' priorities and to plan for educational and school improvements knowing how they will pay for them. (p. 1)
>
> It allows each school community to respond in a more timely and precise way to their own individual needs since they are in the best position to know about them. (p. 1)
>
> The principal has the final responsibility, authority, and accountability. (p. 3)

Note that the concepts invoked in these statements are similar to those articulated by Langley (1984, p. 1). Priorities, planning, responsiveness, knowledge and ideas of authority and accountability are present. The idea of the community is invoked, an inclusion which Cleveland interviewees stressed was an important one for that district.

Clearly, district aims to decentralize reflect those noted in the literature. They include responsiveness, accountability, and effectiveness. They also show a concern about the locus of authority and responsibility, and they reflect the belief that for some decisions, school personnel 'know best'.

Dimensions of Decentralization

The dimensions of school-based management as induced by interviewee responses reflect some of those discussed by Kochen and Deutsch (1980, p. 28), Morgan (1986, p. 35) and Mintzberg (1979, pp. 185–208). They indicate lines of authority, location of responsibility, and most critically, the extent decision-making is moved to schools throughout the districts.

Authority and Responsibility

Edmonton (1986) provides statements of 'principles of organization' which reflect aspects of organizational structure (p. 1). One speaks directly to the 'one boss rule':

> Each individual shall have only one supervisor.

As it stands, this statement seems self-evident. But Strembitsky (1986) tells the story about asking a group of administrators how many bosses each of them had. One answered that he had ten. When the response was checked with the ten persons who were named, seven confirmed that they were the individual's bosses. How many are needed? His view is that persons in organizations need no boss 95 per cent of the time. The internalized standards and knowledge from which they work provide sufficient direction.

However, an Edmonton vice-principal provides a dissonant note:

> The one-boss rule tends to make access to the Superintendent and associate superintendents a hierarchical process... The way school-based management has been utilized has thus distanced the principals from the district leadership.

A second principle articulated by Edmonton is:

> No one shall have authority to direct or veto any decision or action where that person is not accountable for the results. (Edmonton, 1986, p. 51)

This idea also appears to the coincide with the 'one boss rule', as noted by Morgan (1986, p. 35).

A separate pair of principles laid down by Edmonton (1986) speaks to the authority and responsibility given to school principals in particular (p. 57). It may be seen as necessary to subtract certain frequently-encountered constraints to make the authority of the principal clearer, as shown by the statement

> The organization should avoid uniform rules, practices, policies and regulations which are designed to protect the organization against 'mistakes'.

The intention seems to be to avoid the uniformity of standard procedures which have originated because of failures, perhaps of a single instance. If considerable freedom is to be given to personnel in schools, then this principle appears consistent with the idea that

'[School-based management] takes off their chains' (senior Edmonton administrator). Another affirmation of the same thought occurs in the role and responsibility statements for the position of principal:

> The planning and control of the expenditure of all funds. (Edmonton, 1986, p. 57)

Questions about authority and responsibility also impinge on the district as well. Emery Dosdall, Superintendent of Langley, suggested that the usual school accreditation process is inconsistent with district decentralization. While it is useful to have schools evaluated by external teams, schools are not seen as directly accountable to state departments or ministries of education. Under school-based management, they are accountable to the district. Hence, he asserted that it is the responsibility of the district to evaluate the school and the department to evaluate the district.

Cleveland (1982) consists of a series of memoranda entitled the 'Decentralization plan', in which the first memorandum specifies the 'major concepts' of decentralization. These concepts do not invoke principles of organization as Edmonton and Langley do, but they indicate what decentralization means in general terms:

> . . . the allocation of authority to the district headquarters office, the six cluster offices, and the schools over specific areas of school operations.

The second memorandum is more pointedly illustrative of the Board's meaning of decentralization:

> . . . the board has decided that headquarters is prohibited from deciding on those topics delegated to cluster directors and to principals. Cluster directors and principals must themselves decide what to do. (Cleveland, 1982)

Memo Four and the following memoranda offer explicit detail as to what decisions are the purview of headquarters, cluster offices, and principals respectively. Memo Nine indicates the role of school community councils, which is clearly *advisory* to the principal.

Both Edmonton and Cleveland have made a considerable effort to clarify the authority and responsibility of line decision making roles. Cleveland even prohibits decision-making on the part of some. And Edmonton lays out explicitly some of the principles behind its school-based management.

Scope of School Decision-making

To what extent are schools autonomous? What kinds of decisions do they make? Here are some answers to the questions of the selective and parallel nature of decentralization as provided by sources in Edmonton, Langley and the rural districts, and Cleveland.

Edmonton

The Edmonton Superintendent does not see decentralization as complete autonomy at all. He said flatly,

> Schools do not have [public] bank accounts.

He added that

> School-based management is decentralization of a form — it is really a redistribution of the decision-making structure. The centralization of certain tasks is required since there has got to be some control. It is possible to pick tasks for each [level]. (Strembitsky, 1986)

When deciding the scope of school-based management, the key question for each decision was

> Is this a result that schools can be responsible for and manage? (*ibid*)

As confirmed by several Edmonton interviewees, school responsibilities include personnel, equipment, and supplies. Some services are contracted out, but the contracts are undertaken by the schools. The central purchasing office has hired temporary workers from outside the district. When some maintenance is contracted out, the pay is the same as the inside union wage (Edmonton Experience II, 1986).

Some responsibilities are shared between the central office and schools. An example is sick leave: schools bear the cost of the first three days of continuous absence; over three days the district pays. There is the potential problem of a school having to support fifteen three-day absences. It was noticed that the pattern of absences for Mondays and Fridays differs from other days of the week but no allowance was made for that variation (*ibid*).

Edmonton schools participated in an optional plan involving utilities in 1986/87. Eighty per cent of allocations, adjusted for degree days and rates, were given to some schools (Edmonton Experience II,

1986). They were also partially responsible for maintenance in 1986/87 (senior administrator).

Twelve million dollars per year are expended by Edmonton for the services of school psychologists, social workers, subject matter consultants, speech therapists, effective teaching experts, and the like. During 1986/87, fifteen schools and one curricular department in the central office participated in an experiment. Schools were allocated dollars for that curricular service and given the option to spend up to 80 per cent of their allocations outside the district from approved agencies if they wished. There are no results to report from the experiment as yet, but it has been monitored closely. While some apprehension has been expressed by the curricular department, it is known that the number of librarians and counsellors have remain the same under school-based management as they were previously. Yet, it is not known if schools will adjust the level of curricular service up or down (Edmonton Experience II, 1986).

Clearly, the scope for school-based management in Edmonton includes personnel, equipment and supplies. Some tasks are shared between schools and headquarters. But the scope of school-based management also extends into maintenance, utilities and central service functions.

Langley and the rural districts

In Peace River North, schools purchase supplies, equipment, and teaching and non-teaching staff from the central office. Unlike the Edmonton model, maintenance, transportation, and special education itinerant services remain centralized (Stevens, 1987, p. 50).

Another rural district, Nelson (not to be confused with Fort Nelson), has included certificated personnel, office staff and aides, custodial staff, equipment, supplies and utilities within the scope of school decision making (Superintendent Bill Maslechko).

Kellett (1987) investigated some of the structural differences between districts which had adopted school-based management and those which had not. She formed her sample by selecting four school-based management districts (Langley and three rural) and matched them with four non-school-based management ones on a number of criteria. Data were gathered from a questionnaire sent to the secretary-treasurer of each district and from financial records. Except for one school-based management district which was not yet decentralized, the other school-based management districts permitted school control of the number of vice-principals per school, teachers per

school, substitute teachers, teacher aides and clerical workers. For all eight districts, control of level of pay for personnel and regular maintenance remained centralized, while with one exception, responsibility for telephones and teaching supplies had always been decentralized (p. 66). These data support Greenhalgh's (1984, p. 7) general characterization that some decisions will remain centralized under school-based management, while others will be delegated to schools. One of the school-based management districts had specified guidelines for schools' personnel dispositions, however.

> Every school-based decision making school will continue to employ: (a) a principal; (b) a *secretary; (c) a head custodian; (d) a *librarian; (e) a *library clerk; (f) a *learning assistant. *These positions need not be full-time. (Kellett, 1987, p. 74)

It is not clear why the roles of principals and head custodians are required to be full-time; the schools might want to vary those resource deployments. In fact, Stevens (1987) notes that in Peace River North, the district did not place minimum or maximum restrictions on class size (p. 52).

Kellett's impression is that

> Generally the decisions decentralized are those about which the school staff has information, and a direct interest in the outcome of the decisions made; decisions retained by the central authority are those about which the school staff has little information, and often little direct interest. (p. 103)

It is apparent that Langley and the rural districts have extended school-based management beyond personnel, equipment and supplies decisions. However, they are clearly restricted; one particularly so. Authority is explicitly shared with their central offices.

Cleveland

The case of Cleveland provides a special note of contrast to the wide scope of decisions accorded schools in Edmonton, Langley and the rural districts. One reason is that Cleveland is subject to the Revised Code Section 3301.07 of the State of Ohio. Parts of the Code pertaining to educational resources read as follows:

> The ratio of teachers to pupils on a districtwide basis shall be at least one full-time equivalent classroom teacher per twenty-five pupils in average daily membership (3301–35–03).

> A minimum of five full-time equivalent educational service personnel shall be employed on a districtwide basis for each one thousand pupils in average daily membership. (3301–35–03)

Educational service personnel are in these roles:

> counselor, librarian, school nurse, visiting teacher, elementary art, music, and physical education. (3310–35–03)

One senior administrator noted that levels of *administrative* staffing are not mandated. But the problem which these laws raise is a simple one. If schools are permitted the scope to decide numbers and kinds of personnel, will the schools' wishes satisfy the minimum requirements when the district ratios are calculated?

Cleveland schools are provided a lump sum dollar allocation which covers personnel, equipment, supplies, maintenance, and utilities. A principal states simply:

> On paper, the principal is in charge of everything in the building.

There are some exclusions. The central office pays for major building renovations at the school level; principals cannot select custodians from a personnel pool.

> The custodian could *not* be removed if the principal wished. (Cleveland principal)

If a teacher retired and was not replaced, the principal of another Cleveland school did not believe the school would continue to be allocated those funds. She added

> A move between instructional and non-instructional allocation categories requires Board approval.

However, the same school could order equipment from outside the district.

Another Cleveland principal stated that the lump sum allocation to the school does *not* include teachers' salaries. He did not consider himself to have the authority to reduce his teacher complement.

One senior administrator reported that in Cleveland, school maintenance other than janitorial work has been a difficult task to decentralize. Another stated that actual discretionary dollars available to schools are very few, being about 10 per cent of school budgets. This was partly because

> Discretionary dollars have been reduced because of shrinkage in the overall district budget. Such reductions can be absorbed if a school has a surplus from previous years. Some have been forced to fundraise, however.

The intention to give considerable decision-making authority to schools is quite evident in Cleveland. However, the legislative constraint on the total number of teachers combined with the restriction of school authority mostly to equipment and supplies greatly reduces the scope of school-based management there.

Districts differ in the scope of decision-making permitted to schools. Edmonton offers extensive latitude, including some central office functions. Langley and the rural districts showed control over many resources, though one had constraints on the kinds of personnel located in schools. Cleveland, while decentralized for supplies and equipment, had no authority for schools to vary the personnel complement.

Processes of School-based Management

There are several processes embedded in the practice of school-based management. Two important ones which pertain to its structure are the way in which monies are given to schools and the planning schools do to make use of those funds.

Methods of Allocation

The way in which resources are distributed to schools constitutes an important feature of decentralization (as it does with centralized management). Here are some general rules which the districts followed, along with some problems they encountered.

One senior administrator from Edmonton expressed the change in the manner in which resources were allocated to schools in this way:

> The district has moved away from allocating dollars for personnel roles, which is constraining, to allocating dollars per pupil.

Edmonton and Langley have allocation systems in place which determine the total dollars to be given to each school. Since these systems are applied across many schools, they are based on formulas

which, in general, are intended to ensure that the same number of dollars are disbursed for each comparable student. In fact, the large proportion of dollars is based on the simple formula of school enrollment times the allocation per student. Edmonton allocates 90 per cent of resources to ordinary students in this way (senior administrator), while the figure for Langley is 70 per cent (senior administrator). The difference in the two percentages may be explained by the way in which the formulas are set up.

There are exceptions to the general rule of 'the money follows the child'. One case was a child who was identified for enrollment in a sight-saving class. The money for that child was directed to the neighbourhood school and not to a school across the city as the parent requested. Edmonton has 20 per cent of special education children in their home schools, but the Board does not always allocate funds to the local schools for special needs children (Strembitsky, 1986). Another kind of variation from precise per-student allocations is based upon the school. Building age is taken into account. And some neighbourhood schools could not be kept open with standard allocations. With reference to small schools, the Edmonton Superintendent said,

> We now pay $95,000 to turn the key in the front door. This amount is reduced to zero for 300 students.

Allocations are also enhanced for schools with multiple programs. The actual amount per individual student varied from $2566 to $17,987 in 1986/87 (Edmonton Experience II, 1986).

Alexandruk (1985), who surveyed schools in Edmonton, provides his summary on the allocation of resources.

> Respondents [both principals and teachers] perceived the allocation formulas as being inadequate and resulting in severe restrictions on small schools and small programs . . . [They] indicated that as school size decreases, the amount of flexibility in the educational program declines rapidly. The view was expressed that, while school budget allocation formulas have established a degree of equity among schools in the district, the formulas have not sufficiently addressed the particular needs of small schools or schools with unusual mixes of educational programs or needs. (pp. 113–4)

A number of interviewees in Edmonton also pointed out the 'small school problem', now corrected, which came about because the original formula was linear. Allocations to small schools were once

strictly proportional to those in large schools with the result that small schools had little discretionary income.

Another criticism of the allocation process was that the total amount of money available (which drives the allocations per student) is determined in advance by the school board, whereas the educational priorities are set by schools much later. Calling this process 'supply side education', Sommerville (1985) argues that the educational priorities should be determined before the resources are specified.

A major point to be made about the allocation system is that it provides each school with a lump-sum dollar figure. The formulas do *not* determine *how* the schools are to spend their money. A Langley principal expressed the idea quite bluntly:

> The allocation is just that, an allocation and not a prescription for expenditures.

Some Langley principals indicated that they would not want to return to 'squeeky-wheel budgeting' where school allocations were once affected considerably by principals who lobbied with central office staff.

A further concern which interviewees raised was the 'small district problem', a variation of the small school problem which occurred when school-based management was adopted in Fort Nelson. A senior administrator said

> Student-driven expenses at the small rural school out of town are not comparable to those for the high school in town. The two elementary schools are all that are going to feel any difference because they are the only two schools in the district that are the same size. In effect, we are setting up a program [of school-based management] which accommodates 500 out of 1000 students or 50 per cent of the students in 40 per cent of the schools in the district.

It appears that when schools are not comparable, the use of allocation formulae does not fit their requirements. Corcoran (1985) notes that in Fort Nelson, funding for the small secondary school is driven by external requirements

> to provide a sufficient diversity and an adequate level of educational programming. (p. 40)

Cleveland's allocation system varies from the others because many different sources of funds are directed to schools. Sources include

federal, state, and local; some of these are categorical (senior administrator).

Allocation systems encountered in the districts are mostly enrollment-driven. This means that previous methods of disbursing personnel, equipment and supplies have been supplanted largely by the use of dollar allocations per student not calculated on those three bases at all. Some adjustments are made in the formulas. Evidently, such allocation systems present two difficulties. One is the 'small school problem', which occurs when allocations per student are the same for all schools, and the 'small district problem', which arises when each school requires its own basis for funding.

Aspects of the Budgeting Process

Planning is seen as an integral part of decentralized decision-making. Edmonton schools receive their lump-sum figures in March and updates in October (as a result of enrollment counts on 30 September which are subject to such factors as the housing market and open school boundaries). As a result, schools know the extent of their resources. But the process of planning within the schools continues for most of the year, according to the principals. In fact, there are two 'cycles' during the year for Edmonton and Langley, one describing district activities and the other covering school activities. Like two giant cogs, they connect for planning where district goal decisions are transmitted to schools (Taylor, 1987, p. 28). An Edmonton principal noted that the sequence of school cycles also overlaps:

> School-based management imposes a continual time line. The old year's evaluation is not finished before the school is asked to restart the cycle.

Clearly, the districts' intentions are to have school plans connected with school resources and district goals. That objective may not be achieved fully. An Edmonton vice-principal noted

> In many cases, schools do not associate the goals with the statement of finances.

However, an Edmonton senior secondary principal explained that his budget was broken down by school program with staff attached. That way, programs and their costs are associated directly. He added that he permits departments in his school to have deficits and surpluses.

While chapter 12 on accountability focusses on the process more

completely, a critical facet of budgeting is the way in which teachers' services are acquired in Edmonton and Langley. All teachers are purchased at the district average teacher salary rate, about $36,000 in Canadian funds for Langley in 1986/87. It is not clear why this method of payment for teachers was chosen, since it overlooks differential abilities, particularly of junior and senior teachers. However, two considerations may be raised. One is that a large proportion of teachers is at or near the maximum on the salary scale (Edmonton Experience II, 1986). Another is that salary differentiation among teachers when school-based management was being implemented could have produced unwanted conflicts between principals and teachers. One outcome of the ability of schools to purchase new teachers is that teachers not in a school are placed in a pool and are required to gain principal approval before joining any particular school.

The districts investigated have set up planning-budgeting cycles which last most of the year and are intended to link district and school goals with dollars expended. One important aspect of these cycles is the way in which teachers are purchased at a uniform rate and selected from a district-wide pool.

Summary

The structure of school-based management is one which incorporates the organizational form — authority is delegated from the central office to school personnel. Districts are divisionalized in Mintzberg's terms; their intentions for school-based management are consistent with many of the aims of decentralization articulated in the literature. Authority and responsibility are clearly specified for administrative roles. The scope of school authority varies from supplies and equipment to some control over central office consulting services. Two key processes of school-based management are quite evident — one is the process of allocating money on a per-student basis to schools, the other is the budget review cycle.

Chapter 9

Does School-based Management Provide Flexibility of Decision-Making?

As demonstrated by the literature on organization and on education, the idea of flexibility encompasses the key concept of responsiveness to local conditions, the extent of the ability to respond, and the possibility that initiatives beyond the ordinary are taken. Here are some reactions from interviewees. They illustrate the scope and variety of decisions made by schools with school-based management. The first section addresses some general reactions to decentralization. The next examines examples of particular decisions grouped as ones pertaining to equipment and supplies, school staff, and central office resources. Some examples are also presented as sets of decisions made by individual schools. A third section looks at the issue of initiatives taken by decentralized schools. And a fourth returns to more general reactions about flexibility from principals and others.

General Reactions

A number of interviewees stressed the lack of freedom which was available to them prior to decentralization. One Langley elementary principal remarked that under centralized administration,

> . . . the school can prove a need for speech and language aid but it gets the answer back 'We have a limited number of speech and language persons'.

One response to being thwarted was to attempt to achieve the same ends through unapproved means, even ones contrary to directives. But one Langley principal said

> [We] should not have to circumvent the system, doing 'wrong' in order to do 'right'

Under school-based management, the district intention is to have district service

> . . . provided upon request so that help is available if and when needed and so that 'help' is not given when it is not needed. (senior Langley administrator)

This remark suggests that under centralized management, district priorities usually took precedence over school ones.

Another reaction pertains to the way principals felt that their own schools were special and had particular needs. A Langley principal expressed his view of responsiveness quite simply:

> The heart of the matter is the ability to respond to the unique needs of the school.

A Peace River North principal said,

> You can now do the little things in your school for people that make the job that much better; before you had to get prior approval.

In addition, a Langley principal said

> The choices of how to run a school are much better. The decisions are now made closer to where the action is.

But the ability to respond is conditional on the span of time of response, as noted by Kochen and Deutsch (1980, p. 11). Interviewees clearly felt that school-based management permitted them to respond to problems or needs within a reasonable time. A senior administrator in Langley raised the idea of speed of response in his characterization of school-based management as:

> . . . faster and more effective decision making that allows for professional[s'] involvement in decisions that affect them.

The extent of flexibility accorded schools is also addressed in the chapter on the structure of school-based management. But it was illustrated well by a principal from Peace River North who travelled for job interviews outside his district and remarked

> Here I have control of a budget that is over $400,000. In that district, my discretionary budget would be about $4000.

A Langley principal was working to establish a new school. His task was to sort out what the school was intended to be. He remarked

> You start with a school building, kids and dollars.

These two principals showed the extent of flexibility in two divergent ways. The first indicated that quantitatively, his impression was that his freedom had increased 100 times beyond that offered by centralized management. The second principal was required to define a new school and to him, only three factors were 'givens'.

Administrators were quick to compare the inflexibilities which they perceived to exist under centralized management with the ability to respond to problems which they had under school-based management. There is also a hint of pride in their authority to respond to their own circumstances.

Particular Decisions

A number of examples of decisions about equipment and supplies were offered by interviewees. In some districts, personnel decisions (and tradeoffs with equipment and supplies) were also given as examples of school-based management outcomes. The scope of decisions is increased to include utilities and even central office support services. These are followed by samples of groups of decisions made by individual schools.

Equipment and Supplies

Among the most immediately mentioned decisions mentioned by interviewees were those pertaining to equipment and supplies. One Edmonton school purchased an internal telephone system, some computers, and a bus (principal). A person without the relevant information might find it difficult to understand why funds would be spent on telephones or buses. Strembitsky (1986) gave the example of schools who require extra audio visual equipment because they are in two-storey buildings. In both these cases, centralized management in Edmonton had not accommodated these needs.

A Langley principal reported that

> [i]t is possible to borrow from the central office for large equipment purchases and pay back in three years, interest-free.

Another said

> We are now able to supply equipment like computers and the extra overhead projectors which the staff felt they would never receive in the past.

The staff of a large secondary school in Langley reduced copier use and instead hired an aide. A senior administrator mentioned

> This would not have been allowed under centralization . . . we would have to put an aide in every school.

There are other examples of equipment/personnel tradeoffs. A Langley elementary principal reported that

> The chief building custodian arranged a schedule in consultation with his staff to cover times of absence. Consequently, he saved the school money since the first three days of substitute pay are billed to the school. Later that same year, the vacuum cleaner broke down and the chief building custodian was able to buy a new one for $700.

Another Langley principal wanted more resources to be devoted to teaching:

> We conserve supplies and take better care of the building in order to divert money into the teaching personnel account.

There appeared to be a sizable number of acquisitions of tangible items. Many interviewees stressed the idea that their actions would not have been permitted under centralized management. Further, they have been able to shift resources between personnel and equipment/supplies.

School Staff

There are many examples of flexibility of decisions directly affecting personnel. One provided by Strembitsky (1986) was the previous district allocation of $100,000 for professional development for personnel in Edmonton's schools. When the budget requests for professional development from schools (later under school-based management) were aggregated, the figure was $400,000. Professional development may be perceived as an area of critical need. Three Langley principals commented:

> We placed $1000 into our Pro. D. fund . . . we could never do that before.

> More money is directed toward our professional development account. We purchase release time and even dinners for our staff when we run our . . . workshops . . . Morale is much higher due to the flexibility of being able to make these types of decisions.

> Our professional development and substitute accounts were increased by reducing our janitorial services.

Tradeoffs between kinds of personnel were mentioned. A Langley principal said

> The staff decided that larger classes were a reasonable exchange for 10 per cent release time for each teacher while physical education is being taught to their classes each day.

Choice of personnel is another facet of responsiveness to needs. An English department was faced with the choice of $30,000 worth of new materials for the learning centre or an additional teacher. Department members then asked 'What kind of teacher?' This illustration shows how handling money brought ideas and problems forward which have not been the province of the English department before (Strembitsky, 1986). A Langley principal noted

> The school short lists for custodians and teachers, then interviews and recommends.

He added that schools have the ability to change their personnel complement *during the year*, subject to district approval. A senior administrator in Cleveland pointed out that principals now choose their teachers.

One secondary principal in Langley mentioned that he could share the costs of teachers with other schools. An elementary principal in Langley confirmed this idea:

> . . . we are now able to service areas of need. Under decentralization, we have bought the services of a band teacher from another school for two 45-minute periods each week because our music teacher doesn't have the background. We have also bought some counselling time from that same school.

It is difficult to say how numbers and proportions of kinds of personnel may shift over the long term. However, the interviewees' responses indicate the possibility that resources for personnel may have increased in schools. Evidence includes: In Peace River North, three school-based management schools increased their resource room teacher time from 1.7 to 2.0, 0.8 to 1.0, and 0.7 to 1.0 full-time equivalents respectively. Other additions were hiring of a part-time music specialist at two schools, and hiring of a part-time enrichment teacher at one school. A Langley principal noted:

> The flexibility allows you to control school operations. We are now able to hire a physical education specialist as well as a 0.3 learning assistance teacher who was employed for eight months from 1 October 1984 to 1 May 1985.

The use of resources deployed directly for learning also includes an example provided by an elementary principal in Edmonton, who said he was able to match an experienced mathematics teacher with one who 'needed help'. A Langley elementary principal was able to dispose of grade levels in reading. This change was not seen as possible under centralized management, because he would have had to 'squeeze $4000 out of the Director'. Now the school has homogeneous grouping for reading across all grades. This change also required an extra teacher, and the principal feels sure that his request would have been turned down.

However, one Langley principal noted that flexibility of personnel decisions was limited:

> You can't clean house . . . [and] you have to live within the bounds of the union contract.

He added that schools may be required to defer a personnel change for more than a year. This is because the central office always has the power of veto over proposed school budgets in Langley and district priorities are sometimes invoked.

Another principal ruminated on some of the limits of flexibility in this way:

> . . . the push for more rational expenditures will cause hard questions to be both asked and answered . . . there is a real possibility that we will have to face the fact that some work (nonprofessional) in the system is being done by teachers . . . Pressure will come from the teachers themselves . . . teacher organizations will have to adjust where they are unable to justify . . . In the short term, a staff may be faced with making decisions that are 'anti-policy' of teacher organizations. These decisions must be faced . . . they won't go away.

Perhaps freedom from some of the rules of the central office does not imply freedom from the rules imposed by teacher associations.

Since a large percentage of any school's resources are represented by the personnel it contains, perhaps it should not be surprising that

interviewees reported so many examples of decisions affecting personnel. These include professional development ones, for which schools appeared to perceive a critical need. Choice of who works in the school seemed most welcomed by principals. The ability to share staff was stressed. Several of the principals stated they had satisfied school needs for additional staff. And the idea of leadership for staffing decisions was mentioned. But the freedom to make personnel decisions is limited and it raises questions as to whose rules will prevail.

Decisions Beyond Staffing

The range of flexibility may be widened further. Some schools in Edmonton and Langley pay for their own utilities. Moreover, Edmonton undertook an experiment during 1986/87 and 1987/88. For fifteen schools and one curriculum department, schools were allocated the monies for those subject matter consultant services, to be spent as they wished. The privilege of not purchasing those services, or of finding them outside the district, was accorded (see the results chapters on structure and change for details).

According to an associate superintendent in Edmonton, prior to decentralization services were provided by a team of four consultants: a psychologist, a social worker, a reading specialist and a speech therapist. One team would normally serve twenty schools. The problem with that arrangement was two-fold. First, some schools had need of more services in a particular area, such as social work, than the team could provide. They might have needed less in another, such as reading. Second, if a school was dissatisfied with the quality of service of one of the team members, the principal did not have the latitude to seek services outside the team because substitutions were not permitted. The Associate Superintendent explained that of his three schools which were participating in the experiment on consultant services, all had saved money. That is, they had not spent their allocation for consultants on consultants, but in other ways. He summed up the arrangement in this manner:

> The customer is now calling the shot.

However, a consultant raised the question,

> Are schools and principals well enough informed to know what they need to buy?

This is the familiar issue of knowledge. Who knows best?

Four examples of decisions beyond staffing follow. Three are general ones; they included special education and building maintenance. One is specific to a single school.

Does flexibility extend to funding for special education students? In Edmonton, the answer is 'yes'. According to a senior administrator, the Province offers block funding for special education. This funding is passed to the schools as part of the untargeted allocation for each year.

During the 1987/88 year, seven schools were fully responsible for their own maintenance. The rest were on a cyclic maintenance program determined centrally combined with partial school maintenance responsibilities. All could purchase some services from outside the district providing they received bids both from the district maintenance department and outside contractors (Edmonton Associate Superintendent).

Two unusual examples of flexibility provided by school-based management follow. When Edmonton's central city population lost 40,000 during recent years, the remainder of the district gained 30,000. Schools with space were often 'poor' schools, but some were able to rent out space and others used it for daycares. Prior to decentralization in Edmonton, a school's request for landscaping funds was lost among other central office priorities. Under decentralization, the request was approved for $90,000 (Strembitsky, 1986).

Actions of Individual Schools

Examples of individual decisions presented by interviewees provide a general perspective of the flexibility accorded under school-based management. However, they do not enable the reader to appreciate the impact on any one school. Here are some lists of school actions provided by principals who show what individual schools have 'done with their money'.

An elementary school principal in Edmonton reported the following actions which he believes would not have been permitted there without school-based management:

(a) Three mathematics classes were combined with three teachers. One reason this was done was to combine weaker with stronger teachers.

(b) The number of instructional minutes of mathematics was increased.

(c) A new program was instituted to help with study skills, specifically a homework log.

(d) Extra time was allocated to relieve homeroom teachers to contact parents and to aid students.

(e) One person was given five periods per week off to monitor late arrivals and absence notes.

This principal says he felt more of an educational leader since the institution of school-based management which permitted decisions regarding staffing to be made at the school.

In one Langley secondary school, the principal reported that following actions to be taken via the Staff Allocations Committee:

(a) A parent convention was held at a cost of $2000.

(b) A Macintosh computer and software were purchased for the library.

(c) Professional development funds of $1000 were set aside because teachers felt there was a lack of professional development time.

(d) Textbooks were purchased.

(e) An extra secretary was hired.

(f) A library aide was hired at half-time.

(g) A secretarial aide was hired at half-time.

(h) Teachers were paid for noon hour supervision.

(i) Long distance controls were placed on telephones.

(j) Staff rooms were modified.

(k) Additional markers and aides were hired.

The principal of a Cleveland middle school shared a list of school equipment acquisitions which she believes would not have been approved under centralized management there. They include

(a) New chairs for the library,

(b) Computer laboratory chairs and tables.

(c) A new carpet in the library.

(d) A laminating machine.

(e) A large-capacity copier.

(f) A spirit duplicator.

(g) Four new computers.

(h) Two word processing typewriters.

(i) A slide projector.

(j) Playground equipment.

Another middle school principal in Cleveland said that the ability to spend school money on field trips is much appreciated by teachers. Some school purchases which she believes would not have been allowed there under centralized management were

(a) Window shades.

(b) A copy machine with the capacity of 50,000 per month.

(c) A snowblower tractor for $5000.

(d) A floorscrubber/burnisher.

(e) Four computers above the district allocation.

(f) A VCR and television set.

(g) Additional chairs and tables.

A grade four to twelve school principal in Cleveland reported that prior to school-based management, the school had only the essentials, nothing new. He said simply that under centralized management,

I'd be at someone's mercy.

Some important expenditures made possible by school-based management included standard acquisitions such as

(a) Cabinets.

(b) Replacement of student desks.

(c) Magazines for English, reading, science and social studies.

(d) A master teacher series of books.

(e) Library books.

(f) Films, records, and tapes.

Expenditures which would be difficult to make under centralized management but which the principal saw as special to the school included

(a) Lighting and sound equipment.

(b) Lumber for scenery.

(c) A radial arm saw.

(d) Rental of theatres.

These school decisions reflect the acquisitions of equipment and personnel. While some of their principals believed that such acquisitions would not have been possible without decentralization, the existence of other schools which are well equipped and located in centralized districts suggests they could be wrong. However, these lists do demonstrate what they have been able to gain.

Initiative

One group of interviewees perceived the prospects for innovation in schools to be enhanced by school-based management.

A senior administrator in Langley commented:

> I see principals who are making more unique decisions than ever before and they are confident in what they are doing.

A principal agreed:

> It is possible to *initiate changes* via budgeting and decision making.

He expressed strongly the need for the principal to 'have a vision'. His view was that

> Teachers know that 'if we can come up with something, we can try it out'. As a result, they are prepared to discuss more options. They are not afraid to put forward an idea which costs money.

An example of initiative was provided by Langley, which has a series of alternative schools along with open boundaries; fifteen per cent of students pursue their education in alternative programs. Superintendent Emery Dosdall believes that decentralization has encouraged the development of such alternatives as a 'Saturday Morning School'

because they are funded on the same per-pupil basis. He said principals find

> participation [in alternative programs] is a way to bring the client in.

The prospects for initiative-taking may be enhanced still more. According to one senior Edmonton Administrator, the results from the user pay arrangement may be more significant than those achieved under decentralization thus far. This is because there may be more stimulus for change when schools receive more dollars and can call upon the services they wish to receive from inside or outside the district.

Initiative was associated with leadership in the minds of some interviewees. One Langley principal clearly wished to impose his or her own views on the school:

> I believe in a low pupil-teacher ratio. I have been able to bring about my philosophy of a low PTR. We place most of our money into human resources and I can only do that with decentralization.

A senior Cleveland administrator asserted that

> If a principal is willing to take risks, he or she can have an influence on a school.

He also noted that surplus funds have been used for lunchroom supervision personnel, which had 'never been done before'.

However, not all viewed school-based management as an avenue to innovation. An Edmonton vice-principal said

> On the one hand, the district administration has provided the technology of decentralization, but on the other hand it has tightened the control to discourage initiatives outside of the norms.

This remark raises the question as to what extent innovation at the school level is encouraged or discouraged by decentralization. A senior administrator in Edmonton addressed the question of rewards and punishments for school initiative in a letter subsequent to his interview:

> The money which is allocated . . . includes no reward (incentive) nor any penalty (for not doing well). Schools with good results do not get more funds than schools who do not produce such good results. . . . [C]reativity is not tied to resources in any manner.

But he also asserted that

> [W]hen schools have control over their funds they can be more creative in choosing options because they are better able to deal with conflicting criteria associated with any problem.

Much the same view was expressed by an Edmonton teacher, who said

> School-based management provides no incentive to innovate.

She believed that decentralization does not hamper initiative-taking, but neither does it reward attempts at innovation in schools.

An Edmonton principal made this observation on the effect of decentralization:

> School-based management will not turn a nonenactive leader into an enactive leader.

Again, leadership and initiative were associated, but in this instance, not with certainty.

Is there much evidence that schools under school-based management take special initiatives? A Peace River North School board member noted that in one school staff, there was

> . . . nothing brash or innovative.

This idea is supported by the reactions of several principals who were interviewed. When asked about innovations resulting from decentralization, their replies were confined to changes which did not appear particularly sizeable or novel. Their responses were more typical of the Langley principal whose school had acquired a twenty-two-passenger bus. Money was borrowed from the Board at the prime rate and the bus was rented to other schools on occasion. It was very difficult for the interviewer to judge the degree of creativity shown in the purchase and use of this bus. Details of the circumstances were not known, although the acquisition seemed somewhat unusual. It was just not possible to judge the extent of innovative behaviour on the basis of the responses given.

Another factor to consider in attempting to assess the levels of initiative demonstrated by schools under school-based management is the extent of resources available for innovation. Schools in British Columbia, and to a lesser extent in Alberta were subject to retrenchment conditions during the period of this study. It is possible that if resources were more plentiful, more examples of initiatives would have been forthcoming. The topic of retrenchment is addressed in chapter 12 on change.

More General Reactions

The evidence, on a case-by-case basis, seems to indicate that school personnel are able to make and carry out decisions which may not have been possible under more centralized management. Schools appear to be taking more control of their personnel, equipment, maintenance, utilities and supplies. The presence of uniform rules for school resources, regardless of the source of those rules, seems contrary to the idea of school-level control.

The individual remarks on flexibility are supported by large numbers of school-level personnel in Edmonton. Alexandruk (1985) sampled thirty-two principals (an 84.2 per cent return rate) and 475 teachers (a return rate of 46.4 per cent). One of his questions asked to what extent flexibility had been achieved. The total sample responded by saying it had been attained in schools at the 50 per cent level, an indication that it could be increased further (p. 48). When asked what were the general strengths of school-based management, respondents mentioned items which were then classified by Alexandruk (p. 109). Flexibility was reported as the leading strength by principals and teachers. It would appear that Edmonton school personnel believe that their roles accord them a fair measure of flexibility of decision making on matters which are important to them.

The intention of the districts to increase flexibility is reflected in a statement by a senior Edmonton administrator whose view of the formerly centralized management was that it was

> easier to get forgiveness than permission.

Now, under decentralization, he asserted that it is

> easier to get permission than forgiveness.

A second look at this pair of remarks reveals that they refer to permission, which is the willingness to offer licence or flexibility. However, they also reflect the presence of judgement or accountability which accompanies the flexibility accorded.

Summary

When asked about the flexibility of decision-making provided them under school-based management, principals emphasized that they operated under fewer constraints than under centralization. They said they had a greater ability to adapt to school needs with greater speed.

Their scope of decision-making was wider than previously. Such general responses were supported by many examples of particular decisions they made, ranging from equipment and supplies, staffing, and even including tradeoffs between the two. The prospect of central office staff being included in the scope of school decisions was raised. Actions of individual schools in Edmonton and Cleveland also showed how needed resources were deployed; many of these actions were believed 'not possible' under centralization. Responses about school-based management being a stimulus for initiative were divided. Overall, interviewees perceived that decentralization offered the opportunity for innovation, but not necessarily the impetus. When general reactions were considered again, it was noted that from survey results that many principals and teachers believed flexibility had increased and that it was the leading strength of school-based management.

Chapter 10

Does School-based Management Provide a System of Accountability?

The concept of accountability means having to 'answer for' one's actions, particularly the results of those actions. Although not all of this chapter speaks directly to the theme of accountability, it was included to provide an understanding of the general impact of school-based management on the important personnel roles in the decentralized districts. One facet of accountability in school districts is the budgeting process and so it is examined. Next, the accountability of each role from board member to central office person, principal, teacher, support person and parent is explored. Finally, measures of district and school performance are discussed.

As the chief complement to flexibility, accountability was one of the most frequently-mentioned subjects among respondents. The starting point of discussions was often centralized management. One senior administrator in Langley likened its process to

> Giv[ing] a child a week's allowance on Thursday and saying that if it was not spent by Saturday it would be returned.

Let us determine how budgeting is supervised under decentralization.

The Budgeting Process

The following commentaries portray how the budgeting process is undertaken in Edmonton, Langley, the rural districts and Cleveland.

A brief description of the district budgeting process is presented here (Edmonton Experience II, 1986). Schools know in January the resources available for the following year. Board member sub-committees meet with principals during February to find out plans. They talk about but may not change school budgets. However, Board

members ask how school programs reflect district priorities. Schools submit their budgets to the Board and approval is given by the end of April, within one month of submission. School surpluses and deficits are carried forward to the next year. For example, when the total budget was $165 million during the first year of school-based management, surpluses amounted to $3 million. It is important to note that Edmonton switched from the fiscal year to the school year so that educational planning and financial planning could coincide.

An Edmonton School Board member also reported that the Board participates in the yearly review of school and central office budgets. Each Board member meets with the principals of sixty-five schools in small groups. Budget sub-committee sessions are public and a considerable amount of information is presented prior to the Board's final budget decision for that year. During the first year, budget reviews were difficult. Now they are welcomed by Board members.

A secondary principal in Edmonton observed that the budgeting process is a year-long one with peak times. January is the time for setting priorities. March is the time for the delivery of a 'pretend' budget which reflects resources approximately. A 'crunch' budget is established in September when specific allocations are known.

A number of interviewees noted how critical the 30 September enrollment was, since a school could have its income reduced by well over $2000 if only one student left on 29 September or not receive a needed $2000 if a new student arrived on 1 October. Such observations led to confessions that when faced with the news that a large family was about to move just before the end of the month, some principals were inclined to 'try to keep Mrs. O'Flannigan's six kids in the school one more day'.

A problem is caused by the lead time necessary for planning. According to a teachers' association representative, planning in February for September is difficult when enrollments are not known. Another difficulty is faced by schools with small numbers of students. The smaller the school, the more uncertain the forecasts for short-term sick leave, for instance. As a consequence, plans are tentative. This assessment of school planning is offered:

> There are simply too many unknown variables in February for meaningful planning to occur.

In Edmonton, expenditures are tracked. Each school receives a monthly expenditure statement. When school-based management was introduced, schools initially kept a parallel expenditure set of records but this practice is no longer followed (Edmonton Experience II, 1986).

A senior administrator in Langley indicated that

> . . . district and all school budgets are open to the inspection of the schools and the inspection of the public *before the school year begins.*

One Langley principal's description of a similar process included the fact that his school allocation, received in April, was based upon the forecasted 30 September enrollment. If the enrollment was over-estimated, cuts were likely and could include release of a teacher or custodian (from the school). Supplies could be cut back and the surplus could also be used. There is a problem with school turnover; elementary schools in Langley tend to increase in enrollment during the year while secondary enrollments go down.

Another Langley principal reported that the budget proposals are defended, although the central office has veto power over school budgets. Another remarked that status reports are sent monthly to each school from the budget office.

Stevens (1987) notes that in Peace River North, each school's plan was 'driven' by school philosophy and objectives. A rule of variance was applied (p. 53). Schools were not allowed to vary from their approved allocations by more than 10 per cent without the approval of the Assistant-Superintendent (p. 56). Further, Stevens elaborates on the process in this way:

> Once the staff approved the budget, it was presented to the Assistant-Superintendent for his approval. He discussed with the principal any contentious items such as . . . inordinately high class sizes or too large a decrease in janitorial time. If agreement was not reached, the principal took the budget back to the staff for revision. (p. 55)

However, Stevens adds

> The Assistant-Superintendent had been given instructions to give schools wide latitude in preparing their budgets. Principals indicate this [directive] has been adhered to. (p. 55)

A Cleveland senior administrator sketched a parallel process in his district: Each school puts forth its budget at a hearing of the Budget Review Committee of the Board. The cluster superintendent plays a minimal role in the budgetary process. His/her job is to discuss school goals with the Principal and ensure that principals are held responsible for checking budget codes. The cluster superintendent cannot veto a

budget if it is within state law. Also, the Director of School-based Management does *not* veto school budgets.

While Cleveland's budget cycle was not investigated in detail, the others districts showed a pattern in common. The double cycle exists — one for the district, the other for schools. In general, district allocations result in a lump sum dollar figure for schools. Receipt of knowledge of those resource limits is followed by school planning activities (reported more extensively under the subheading of participation), which are then followed by review mechanisms involving board members in which considerable information is shared. A budgetary control process also is present and characterized by a balance between the semi-autonomy of schools and the line authority of associate superintendents. One way to objectify the control, found in Peace River North, is the use of a rule of variance. School expenditures are also monitored on a monthly basis.

Role Changes

Some of the most compelling effects of school-based management are the impacts on roles of persons in the districts studied. Boards behave differently in significant ways. Central office functions are affected. The principalship changes substantially. And the roles of teacher and support staff person are altered somewhat. Let us examine the ways in which roles are changed and address the main issues raised by the respondents.

School Board

The role of the School Board appears to vary from that of most districts across North America. An Edmonton trustee delineated the job of Board members. They

(a) set policy,

(b) have responsibility for collective negotiations,

(c) determine the overall budget,

(d) specify the student allocation formula,

(e) establish district priorities,

(f) provide an interface with the senior government, and

(g) monitor individual school budgets.

Note the general nature of these functions. The Edmonton Superintendent believes that the Board now moves

> directionally as opposed to exactly.

Does a possible lack of precision and control exist? An Edmonton trustee expressed her view of school-based management's authority structure in this way:

> Very definitely, the Board is in charge.

She said that the Board works through the Superintendent. Principals are directly responsible via the Superintendent. Parents can articulate any concern through their principal. One Langley principal explained that

> The Board now refuses to hear parental complaints until they have been brought to the attention of the teacher, principal, and superintendent.

An Edmonton Board member phrased the same idea even more simply:

> The buck is passed back [to the school].

This policy affirms the chain of command and reduces the likelihood that Board members will make direct requests of schools. It also may diminish the amount of contact between the Board and individual members of its electorate.

Another Edmonton trustee raised the thought that the Board knows the dollars allocated to programs. It also has some knowledge of the program outputs. Prior to school-based management, ownership was perceived as being very general. Now the Board is more informed about specific activities.

A senior administrator in Cleveland explained that the Board determines general policy but that regulations come from the cluster and school levels. When school-based management was implemented, district policies were revamped to accommodate decentralization. Policies were allotted to the central office, cluster, or school, depending on the topic. This changed stopped the Board from making exact rules, such as 'all schools shall have one typewriter'. His comment is supported by that of a board member in Langley, who illustrated the shift in focus from processes to outcomes:

> The Board's concern is not with schools doing things right but with schools doing the right things.

One Edmonton Board member made several remarks about his role change:

> We are no longer making 'rules for schools'. There is a need to 'stand back'. When you are uncomfortable with schools' decisions, you must bite your tongue. It is hard to give up things you think kids should have. The Board must believe in their [schools'] competency and decisions. This is a big leap.

He observed one instance wherein one school decided to have more preparation time and increase class size from thirty-two to thirty-five. According to him, such issues are no longer of direct concern to the Board because they do not have any special implications for policy.

These remarks and others made by board members reflect a number of thoughts. One is the concern with general policies as opposed to particular ones relevant to single schools. Another is the scalar chain of command from board to school, because parental concerns are redirected to schools. A third is the fact that when boards no longer address specific school matters as they may have done in the past, the loss of that particular kind of administrative action may require some adjustments in the role expectations of board members.

Central Office Staff

The match between the authority and responsibility accorded to those persons in central office staff roles is an important issue, if the comments in chapter 1 are correct. What impact does decentralization have on this problem?

In Edmonton, associate superintendents supervise principals with a span of control of about thirty-two schools which are geographically proximate (Edmonton, 1985/86). Principals are visited by their respective associate superintendents. One defined the role as that of a 'coach', but also admitted that a few decisions could be made by 'administrative fiat'. That associate's view was to address problems as they arise, a management-by-exception approach.

A cluster superintendent in Cleveland reported that his role provided a link between the principal and the deputy superintendent. He asserted that the 'one-boss-rule' applied in Cleveland, from principal to area superintendent to deputy superintendent to superintendent. Interpreting his own role as that of a facilitator and influencer, he makes suggestions to principals and provides options for them.

Another set of roles in the central office which are potentially influenced by school-based management is the group of consultants, sometimes called supervisors or coordinators, who provide expert advice and assistance to schools. During 1986/87, fourteen Edmonton schools (all volunteers) participated in a pilot program of a user pay system for consultant services. A fixed dollar per hour was the fee charged for each consultant. Some schools were known to be heavy users.

One consultant estimated that about 80 per cent of expert staff was opposed to the user pay concept. A reason which she offered was that the system was designed to offer consultation and not direct service. However, it was perceived that schools wished to have help, not just consultation. Another reason was the potential disparity between the demand for consultants and their supply. A third reservation was that some jobs might be lost.

The Edmonton consultant perceived a potential advantage for central office personnel, however. She observed that some of her colleagues were required to become less specialized under the user pay arrangement. This meant that a consultant could render services beyond his/her district role if requested by a principal. Such services would be offered privately, since principals would be permitted to purchase assistance from outside the district. When that privilege is accorded to principals, questions of internal and external price and quality arise.

An opinion voiced by a senior administrator in Cleveland was that,

> The role of the curriculum and instruction units has lessened.

He also noted that the central office had reduced its number of professionals. However, he said that such a reduction is not fully attributable to school-based management, but also to the difficult financial situation Cleveland has faced.

The picture generated by comments from those persons in the central offices is that those who supervise principals are in more of a supportive than controlling role, though they are line officers. As for the idea of user pay for central office services, it may create both anxieties and some advantages for those in support roles. Reductions in staff are also possible.

Principal

The role of principal appears as a fulcrum for the entire structure of school-based management. As noted by Mintzberg (1979), divisional managers become key figures in the operation of their units (p. 428). First, some general remarks on the role in school-based management are considered. Second, because the principal heavily influences the level of involvement of others in the school in decision-making, the participation issue is addressed.

General Reactions to School-based Management

Responses to the question of the impact on the role of principal are presented in two forms. One is a few comments by interviewees. The other is some results from a masters thesis which surveyed principals and teachers in Edmonton about the strengths and weaknesses of decentralization.

The Edmonton Superintendent noted that

> School-based management has been labelled by some as 'principal-based decision-making'.

One Langley principal phrased the idea quite simply:

> . . . in decision making everything comes back to the principal.

Another corroborated that view.

> . . . we are shouldering most of the decision making.

One reaction to the impact on the role of the principalship was:

> . . . [I] basically agree with (but it scares me) the amount of authority and responsibility of the principal. (senior Langley administrator).

Such responses support the thought that the principal occupies a pivotal role in decentralization.

Alexandruk (1985) polled Edmonton principals and asked them for what they believed to be the *strengths* or positive aspects of school-based management (p. 107). His results were based upon seventy-seven returns representing about 40 per cent of the population of principals. The leading advantage was perceived to be *subsidiarity* (the reduction of decisions to the lowest level), mentioned by 35 per cent of principals. Second was *flexibility* (31 per cent), a category called 'Efficiency,

effectiveness and increased staff awareness of program needs and associated costs' was third (13 per cent), and fourth was *staff involvement in decision-making* (12 per cent) (pp. 108–9). Remaining advantages were equity in resource allocation, accountability, and increased authority for principals (17 per cent of total). Interestingly, 2.6 per cent of principals polled indicated that 'school budgeting has no positive aspects'. Alexandruk's interpretation is

> Respondents (both principals and teachers) perceive school budgeting as providing them with the flexibility at the school level to plan programs to meet school needs and to attend to local priorities established at the school. Subsidiarity is viewed by respondents as a positive development in that decision making at the school site is a reality. Staff involvement in decision making and planning at the school level is seen as a positive development as a result of implementation of school budgeting. (p. 107)

It is unfortunate that Alexandruk's remarks did not distinguish between those comments made by teachers and those by principals.

Alexandruk also asked principals what they believed to be the *weaknesses* of school-based management (p. 112). Based on seventy-four returns, the prime negative aspect cited was the *'time factor'*, (time demands) mentioned by 32 per cent of the principals. Second was the *allocation of resources* (23 per cent), uncategorized comments was third (13 per cent), and fourth was *stress* (10 per cent). Other disadvantages included concerns about lack of meaningful involvement, the downward shift of responsibility to schools, and educational funding, which totalled 20 per cent.

The Alexandruk study provides a counterpoint to the individual responses of interviewees. Its results show several attributes of decentralization which principals agree upon. They see flexibility, efficiency aspects, and staff involvement as positive facets of school-based management with accountability less so. Subsidiarity is seen as more positive than negative. Resource allocation is perceived as more of a problem than an advantage and the time and stress factors are features which are clearly negative ones. A point of inconsistency is the view of the increased authority of the principal combined with the lack of meaningful decision making involvement, perhaps volunteered by different persons in the sample.

Alexandruk (1985, p. 49) also asked the extent to which the principal's role in planning and decision making has been achieved. Principals indicated that school-based management had achieved its

objectives at the 79 per cent level of possible attainment, a greater extent than that perceived by the teachers (73 per cent). For reasons which Alexandruk does not explain, elementary schools perceived higher levels of attainment of aims of school-based management than did secondary schools (p. 73).

How did principals accommodate this role redefinition? An Edmonton associate superintendent mentioned that most had been vice-principals under school-based management and thus had experience with the planning process. He added that no principal had ever been removed for mal-budgeting. Yet, many Langley principals expressed a fear of having a deficit. They said that they try to budget conservatively and to complete the school year with surplus funds. Most schools have fulfilled their needs with funds remaining. According to a senior administrator, there was a surplus of $200,000 generated from all schools in the district during the 1984–85 school year which is an average of $5263 per school or 0.5 per cent of Langley's operating budget (Taylor, 1987, p. 32).

Clearly, the weight of school-based management falls on the principal. He/she is the crux of district organization. While some concerns are raised about the onus of the office, most appear to favour decentralization quite strongly.

Staff Participation

The involvement of school staffs, notably teachers, was a subject of great interest among many interviewees, particularly principals, who perhaps viewed the subject as a critical area which reflected their personal management styles and skills.

What are the expectations for staff participation in the districts studied? According to the Langley (1984) handbook on decentralization, the extent of staff involvement is dependent on the principals' wishes (p. 7). In Peace River North, a Board member indicated that principals were expected to permit staff participation. In Cleveland, a Board policy requires that a budget committee be established in each school. Parent, faculty, students and community representatives are to serve on it (Board of Education, Cleveland Public Schools, Policy number 1210a, 1985).

Responses to those policies vary. Some show that principals delegate part of their responsibility for decision making. One Langley secondary principal said simply:

> . . . department heads in our school make up the budget.

Stevens (1987) reports that in Peace River North, principals raised concerns about asking teachers to decide how to reduce their numbers when enrollment dropped (p. 55). It was agreed that the least senior person would be transferred out of the school. Yet, a Langley principal responded with reference to a school budget committee that

> Members of the committee elected by staff were perceived to be fair and impartial, able to rise above departmental loyalties and concerns, and represent the whole staff with judgement and discretion.

Some principals believed that the formulation of a detailed annual plan (outlining the programs schools are to offer and the resources needed to satisfy those goals) allowed staff members

> . . . more opportunity for input. Some didn't want to know about it or take part in it. However, I made the staff acknowledge the plan and the budget. (Langley principal)

A Cleveland principal reported that his department heads are asked to determine equipment and supply requirements. He anticipates the departmental requests approximately and determines the allocations for each.

However, some principals view the budgeting process rather differently; one Langley secondary principal initially invited extensive staff participation, but

> . . . the Budget Committee (that is mainly comprised of teachers) made various mistakes determining staffing levels . . . and no matter how much I involve the staff in decision making everything comes back to the principal. In the future, the Budget Committee will not be put in the position of determining staffing levels. I will determine the staffing levels.

An elementary principal in Langley asserted that decentralization

> . . . puts school responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the principal. Any problems point the finger right to the principal. Therefore, I'm not going to let the staff make a decision that is going to [deleted] things up . . .

Another Langley principal reported that the school has:

> . . . an elected budget committee which decides on budgetary matters. They then advise me but don't make any final decisions.

One stated flatly

> In Langley, principals do not allow involvement where they have already made up their minds.

It appears that staff involvement exists but principals feel they are required to account for the decisions made. In fact, an Edmonton board member's chief concern about school-based management was that staff involvement in school budgeting was not ensured for all schools.

Some school personnel shared the specifics of their school's staff involvement with their interviewer. The principal of a large high school in Edmonton said that when teachers and support staff are asked to participate in planning and decision making,

> . . . you have to encourage teachers and support staff to look beyond their roles.

In his school, 150 staff members participate in performance reviews. Each has an immediate supervisor. The principal claimed that

> A relationship of trust needs to be established.

An Edmonton teacher reported that in her elementary school of 525 pupils and twenty-five teachers there was a budgetary group made up of three teams defined by grade level (K-2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6). Prior to team budgeting, the school had used curriculum area budgeting. She observed that

> Team leaders do the legwork and computation.

Leaders are selected by the teachers within their respective teams and are given one half-hour off per week for their tasks. Budgets are further broken down by classroom. With regard to budget decisions, she explained

> Our principal's method is to present alternative plans, have the staff discuss them, and then vote.

But she revealed

> Some of our principal's pet plans are not open to a vote . . . Administrator time is one of the sacred cows.

One secondary principal in Langley reported on the composition and tasks of his Staff Allocation Committee:

(a) It is elected by the staff.

(b) One person in ten serves on the Committee.

(c) Membership is changed voluntarily each year.

(d) The Committee works with any surpluses.

(e) The Committee reports to the staff.

(f) It fields many requests for resources.

(g) It makes recommendations on staffing, equipment, and supplies.

He perceived the Committee as being 'hard nosed' because in his estimation, its decisions were well grounded and financially conservative. A surplus of about $20,000 was generated in the first year. However, the Staff Allocation Committee did not make the final staffing decisions. These decisions were the domain of the principal.

A principal in Fort Nelson provided an example of how the school staff worked with the budget one year:

> In the 1985 school year we thought we would have more money than we eventually ended up with. We went to the staff with the historical expenditures. We said, 'Here are the fixed costs . . . Xerox, phone, computer rental, etc. Subtract this from the total budget and here is what we have left to work with for this year.' We then asked the staff to go away and come up with a needs budget for their department. The budgets brought back far exceeded the amount of money we had to work with. So we sat down as a group and went through the rationale of why this expenditure was needed for this department for this year and where savings could be made. We eventually arrived at a consensus and a bottom line which agreed with the amount of money we had to work with. The staff had chopped $7000 in three hours.

A Cleveland middle school principal mentioned that it was Board policy to have the principal seek budgetary input from staff and parents. Her School Budget Committee consisted of department chairpersons and three parents. But she complained

> I have to push to get teachers to speak up at all.

She believed that

> Teachers don't want to be bothered with the extra work or manipulations.

A variety of participatory mechanisms seem to exist in schools with school-based management. Tasks are usually delegated by the principal. Some schools appear to engage in planning as a group process, as desired by Goodlad (1984). In some cases, teachers may require encouragement to participate. And only in Cleveland was the inclusion of parents mentioned explicitly.

Some additional insights into teacher participation and principal decision making are provided by Young (1984). She chose four schools in Edmonton randomly and then gleaned information from the principals and two teachers in each school. Her methods included interviews, observations and the examination of budget documents. While she notes that no single method of budget planning was recommended by the central office, the four principals chose a *consultative* form of decision making in their schools.

Young (1984) offers four reasons why the consultative model dominated in her sample schools (pp. 30–1). First was the teachers' perception that the principal could solve problems because they were straightforward ones. Second, teachers were seen to have little stake in decisions made. Third, traditional role expectations from the time of centralized management were accepted. And fourth, principals and teachers derived different kinds of satisfactions from their work; principals enjoy administration while teachers enjoy teaching.

What have the interviewees told us about participation? Two things. First, there are clear expectations that principals are to involve school staffs in their planning and decision-making. However, principals do not permit decisions to be made when they disagree with them. Their reason is simply that they, not their staffs, are held accountable to their respective associate superintendents. Second, responses to the request for involvement vary according to preferences of the principals. The cases of four schools, backed up by additional ones, indicated a variety of paths to participation, none of which showed a purely autocratic or collegial model of decision making.

Teacher

The potential effects of school-based management on teachers are more broadly experienced than just their degree of involvement in planning and decision making. First, some reactions by interviewees are noted. Second, the results of a poll of Edmonton teachers are presented.

One Langley principal asserted

> Teachers do *not* need an elaborate process of goal formation — they know the needs of the school.

Two of the principals in Peace River North observed that as a result of becoming more involved in the planning process,

> staff have begun to look at instruction more closely.

This idea is supported by Coleman (1987) who conducted interviews in one of the rural districts (the name of which was withheld for anonymity) which had emphasized collegial decision-making (p. 9). He suggested that collegiality was the most notable change he observed in four schools he studied. However, a senior administrator in Cleveland claimed that

> Teachers who put out get what they want.

This is clearly a non-collegial view, and suggests that there are differences in the way teachers are involved in decision making under decentralization.

Alexandruk (1985) asked his sample of Edmonton teachers for the *strengths* of school-based management (p. 109). Based on 398 returns, 25 per cent of teachers mentioned *flexibility* as the leading advantage. This was followed by *staff involvement in decision-making* (23 per cent). *Subsidiarity* was third (19 per cent) and a category described as 'Efficiency, effectiveness, and increased staff awareness of program needs and associated costs' (p. 108) was fourth among teachers, mentioned by 12 per cent. Other advantages included accountability, equity in the allocation of resources, and increased authority for principals, one of which was mentioned by 10 per cent of teachers. A total of 11 per cent of teachers perceived *no strengths or positive aspects* for school-based management.

When teachers were asked to nominate *weaknesses* of school-based management in the Alexandruk (1985) study, leading the drawbacks was the *time demands*, mentioned by 22 per cent of teachers (p. 49). Second was the *allocation of resources* (15 per cent). The *stress factor* was third at 14 per cent and the *increased authority of the principal* was fourth, mentioned by 13 per cent. This result is in contrast to the same response noted as an advantage to teachers. Other concerns were educational funding, the downward shift of responsibility to the schools, and the lack of meaningful involvement, accounting for 22 per cent of teacher responses (p. 112). Alexandruk comments:

> Teachers express a concern that the time requirements for budget preparation and planning are being made in addition to

> an already demanding work load and teaching assignment. (p. 113)

The Alexandruk study reveals that teachers perceive a variety of attributes of decentralization. Judging by the numbers of teachers who offered their views, flexibility and efficiency matters are seen quite positively and accountability was mentioned as a positive factor. Subsidiarity and staff involvement were viewed more positively than negatively. Two aspects which were more negative than positive were the allocation of resources and the increasing authority of the principal.

Do teachers agree with principals about the strengths and weaknesses of school-based management? A comparison of Alexandruk's two sets of data reveals that there is a considerable agreement between the two groups of school personnel who had experienced decentralization for three years before the survey was administered. Both groups appear to rate flexibility highly. They also concur that subsidiarity, efficiency matters, and staff involvement are quite positive features of school-based management. They are both positive but less enthusiastic about the increased authority of the principal. Agreements about negative features of decentralization are also most evident. Both groups are somewhat negative about the amount of funding for schools, which they perceive as being related to school-based management. Both view the method of allocation of resources as more of a problem than an advantage, and both appear to view the time demands and stress factors associated with decentralization as strongly negative characteristics.

Are there any important areas of teacher-principal disagreement? Only two are apparent from Alexandruk's data. One is that the percentage of teachers who indicated that school-based management has no strengths or positive aspects was about four times greater than the percentage for principals (10.6 per cent vs. 2.6 per cent). The other is an obvious matter — the increasing authority of the principal. While some teachers and many principals noted that characteristic as positive, the ratio of teachers to principals who believe the increasing authority is a negative feature is 13.1 per cent to 0.0 per cent.

However, when asked about overall satisfaction with school-based management, on a scale from 1 (highly agree) to 6 (highly disagree), teachers scored an average of 3.27 and principals 1.68 (Alexandruk, 1985, p. 78). Principals clearly favoured school-based management much more than teachers. Fully 65.8 per cent of all his respondents (81 per cent teachers and 19 per cent principals) registered some level of satisfaction with school-based management.

A separate survey undertaken by the Edmonton Public Schools showed a good deal of variation in the satisfaction which teachers express regarding the budget planning process. The level of satisfaction ranged from 24 per cent to 100 per cent for the individual schools, which would indicate that there are some teachers who are not happy with the process (Edmonton Experience II, 1986).

As indicated by the survey figures, many but not all persons are satisfied with their experience in school-based management. Teachers tend to agree with principals about its strengths and weaknesses. Would teachers return to centralized control? According to these data, probably not. Even when under retrenchment conditions experienced in Langley during the period 1983 to 1986, many would not return to centralization. One said he preferred 'self control to central control'.

Support Staff

How have those persons who work in support roles in schools been affected by the change to decentralization? The responses of support staff to school-based management vary.

An Edmonton support staff union representative explained that

> Support staff personnel now have input into jobs and school decisions which affect the kinds of equipment on which they work, their needs for the job, and changes which affect the office.

She mentioned that training on new equipment is now provided in the budget and added

> They regard themselves as part of the school team; they take pride in school achievements, have greater self-confidence, and have positive feelings about their involvement.

Speaking of involvement, she said

> Not all support staff employees participate in decision-making, but all *can*.

The problem of potential job loss arose because of decisions made under school-based management. She addressed this issue in a letter which followed her presentation:

> Job security for permanent support staff within the district has continued to be a concern but [is] due rather to the severe economic conditions of the province and loss of funding for public education rather than due to the decentralized system.

A Langley support staff union representative's view of the changes was quite uncomplimentary:

> Decentralization has brought no benefits for non-teaching staff. There has been a loss of positions in order for principals to divert funds into their 'pet projects'. Overall, the morale is low.

Considerable responsibility appears to be given to secretaries. One Edmonton senior secondary principal noted that the office staff job which had changed the most with decentralization was the school secretary's. He said that

> they are all able to do accounts now.

However, he added that his secretary needs uninterrupted time to manage the accounts. In Peace River North, secretaries were required to undertake more training and acquire knowledge about the budgeting procedures (Stevens, 1987, p. 61). A secretary in Langley who had worked in the same school under the same principal before and after decentralization observed that life in the school office had not changed very much. While her workload had increased, she did not attribute that change to school-based management. But she noted that

> you're more aware of money.

She also suggested that the principal had a large impact on the kind of equipment provided for office secretaries, their professional development, whether there was a non-teaching representative on the School Budgeting Committee, and the office staff's morale. Her observation of other schools was that some secretaries were not as fortunate as she was.

> The principal makes all the difference.

Reactions of support staff diverge in this study. Many have accepted school-based management quite positively while others have not. Concerns about job losses arose. However, some school support personnel may welcome their new responsibilities and greater integration with their school.

Parents

The extent of parental involvement in school planning and decision-making appears to be quite limited and to remain usually at the principal's discretion. One secondary principal in Langley reports that

parents have direct input into school goals using the nominal group technique. But some may have wished for greater levels of participation. Stevens reports that in Peace River North,

> to the chagrin of parents and board members, there was no significant increase in parental involvement. (p. 79)

In a grade 4–12 school in Cleveland, parents review the school budget but, in the principal's opinion, they have limited expertise and interest in school budgeting.

When the matter of parental participation was raised with a number of principals in Edmonton, they tended to respond by saying that there were many avenues to parental involvement. Alternative routes to involvement were mentioned, such as volunteering, conferences with teachers, fund-raising activities, and ad hoc committees. However, not all parents may desire to participate in school decision-making. One principal had tried to establish a parental consultative committee but failed. Some questioned the competence of parents to make the schools' more technical and professional decisions.

Summary

Aspects of decentralization have altered several key roles in the school districts studied. Many roles have been clarified; some are more accountable to their superordinates. Board members are more constrained to policy matters. Central office staff persons do not have authority over school activities. Principals have full authority over and responsibility for their schools. They also endorse school-based management. Teachers participate in school decisions, but they do not control those decisions. Support staff members' responsibilities changed. And the level of parental involvement may have remained about the same.

Performance Measures

In Peace River North, Stevens (1987) reported that educational reviews are undertaken through the use of the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, Provincial Learning Assessment tests, and local district tests for the primary grades (p. 56). Cleveland also has extensive testing. One Langley principal explained that his district surveys the levels of satisfaction of principals, teachers, students, and parents, but not every

year. However, a rather extensive feedback system is operating in the Edmonton public schools.

Edmonton's surveys are administered annually in late May to students and staff, biennially to parents. About 10 per cent of students are included in each survey. Questionnaires are filled out anonymously and that anonymity has been verified by the Board's external auditors. Among the parents, the response rate is 93 per cent. If a response from a parent has not been received in two weeks, a telephone call is placed. Units of fewer than five staff persons are not reported because of the unreliability of data. Quite importantly, the surveys permit profiles of schools to be built (Edmonton Experience II, 1986). However, Strembitsky says flatly,

> There have been no terminations of principals initiated as a result of the surveys.

Since 1979, Edmonton has distributed questionnaires to random samples of parents, students, and staff (Palmer and Mosychuk, 1985). For 1985, student responses numbered 16,139 (a 91 per cent return rate); parents 15,840 (92 per cent); administrators, teachers, and staff returned 6193 (94 per cent). Questions were tailored to each employee group and school level. A question picked at random from Palmer and Mosychuk gives an indication of the kind of information gathered:

> 16 Do you feel that your school/unit is a good place to work? (p. 57)

This question was administered to all staff. Another randomly selected one is

> 20 Do you feel that the number of pupils in the classes that you teach is also appropriate?

This is a school staff question. Responses are 'very much, fairly much, not very, or virtually none' with a category for non-responses included. Although tallies for each category are reported, the level of satisfaction for each item is measured by the tally of 'very muc.' plus 'fairly much' divided by the total and multiplied by 100, exclusive of non-responses.

The district collects and compiles the results and then shares those responses pertinent to each particular school with that school. Although termed 'white knuckle time' by one Edmonton principal, interviewees agreed that results were generally useful. One principal alleged that on receipt of their school's results, principals immediately telephone each other to 'compare report cards'. Schools are also given

district-wide averages and standard deviations of each item, and thus can determine their satisfaction performance relative to the whole. Such feedback from students, parents, teachers and others provides one basis for school performance and administrator evaluation.

However, an Edmonton principal found the results to be too general to be immediately useful. Her concern can be illustrated using the examples from the paragraph above. For instance, the knowledge that only 30 per cent of the school staff found the school a good place to work does not indicate why a problem exists, only that it exists. Likewise, 60 per cent of a staff may feel that class sizes are too large, but the reasons for that view do not accompany the results. Overall, Edmonton interviewees were satisfied with the use of the survey. Even the principal who mentioned 'white knuckle time' felt a lack of feedback one year when the survey was not administered.

Although a number of performance measures were used in the different districts, the most extensive were Edmonton's surveys of students, staff and parents. They measure satisfaction and give feedback to the district and school. They also provide one basis for personnel evaluation.

Summary

School-based management is associated with varying levels of accountability in the districts studied. Review of school budgets by board members constitutes the first important component wherein schools are called into account for their planning associated with intended expenditures. The next component is the impact of decentralization on some roles. Notably, the authority and responsibility of board members, central office personnel, and especially principals, are more clearly specified according to their line or staff functions and their level in the hierarchy. The 'one boss rule' applies. This means that there are direct links of accountability from public to board to superintendent to associate superintendent to principal to teacher. Principals are fully responsible for their schools; they consult with teachers but do not formally share decision making authority with them. Parents do not control schools via councils. Another outcome was the general endorsement of decentralization, particularly from principals, also from teachers, but with mixed views from support staff. The third critical component in the system of accountability, observed in some districts, is the use of surveys measuring the satisfaction of students, parents and district employees.

Chapter 11

Does School-based Management Result in an Increase in Productivity?

As conceived in the literature review, the label of productivity implies the use of the input, process, output model, broadly conceived. Results on productivity under decentralization are reported in this chapter with the main divisions of resource inputs, processes designed to link inputs and outputs and then indicators of outputs themselves.

Resource Inputs

One way that decentralization might affect productivity is by altering the costs of education. This section looks at the possibility that various kinds of costs may be reduced as a result of school-based management. It then explores possible cost increases as outcomes of decentralization. Finally, student access to resource inputs in the form of dollars to schools are investigated.

Cost Reductions

As indicated in the literature, one of the means to increase efficiency is to reduce costs. But there are many kinds of costs. The achievement of outright savings return to school boards is investigated first. Then retrenchment is considered as a savings device. Next, the ability of schools to save a budget surplus is probed. Finally, the idea of cost awareness on the part of personnel is raised.

Does decentralization save money? Strembitsky stated simply

> School-based management was not brought in to save money.

A Langley principal echoed the same idea.

> The idea of decentralization is not to save money, but to spend it more effectively.

Stevens (1987) confirms that for Peace River North,

> [b]oth trustees, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent and the Secretary-Treasurer made it clear that school-based management was not introduced as a means to cut costs. All funds were still to be spent . . . (p. 56)

As Edmonton trustee said that the Board is no happier with the total funds received. However, between 1979 and 1983, the cost per pupil for Edmonton remained the same at $1000 (calculated in constant 1960 dollars). Thus it appears that resources were not increased for the period of impact of school-based management.

A principal from Langley illustrated the effect of retrenchment on decisions. Staff reacted by

> . . . trying to find ways to work around [retrenchment] . . . cut[ting] in some areas to provide in others . . . Teachers are now much more conscious of energy (heat and light).

The concern about decreasing resources was echoed by a Cleveland principal, who offered the details of her school's allocations:

> 1984–85, $249,000 for 820 students
> 1986–87, $160,000 for 753 students,
> a 36 per cent and 8 per cent decline respectively over two years.

In 1987/88, again about $160,000 was available for non-salary items; $80,000 was needed for utilities (mainly heating and cooling). The result was that there were far fewer discretionary dollars available; the school could buy only the essentials. And the work of the budget process remained. She asserted:

> This makes school-based management all work and no fun.

The concern about resource reductions is contrasted somewhat with that about surplus funds enjoyed by some schools. Stevens (1985) notes that the ability to carry forward a surplus was seen most positively by the principals. One commented:

> Then money is saved for actual perceived needs and not spent 'in a last minute frenzy'. (p. 52)

Other principals interviewed saw the ability to have surpluses or deficits an important management tool. However, Strembitsky tells the story that during one year when Edmonton experienced retrenchment, the Board considered using school surpluses to offset the deficit. It was advised by the Superintendent that if the action was taken,

> There will never be surpluses again.

The Board reconsidered.

Does decentralization produce cost consciousness? The Superintendent of Fort Nelson, Garry Roth, indicated that

> [s]chool-based management is philosophically appealing to people who are fiscally responsible because they are faced with the creative challenge of budgeting with a set amount of money.

Strembitsky's (1986) view was that

> Principals want to make the right decisions with fewer dollars.

Interviewees also believed that staffs had gained a greater awareness of costs in their own schools. A Langley principal commented on teacher absenteeism.

> Perhaps because the school covers the first three days of pay for a substitute teacher, the school staff 'goes after' those teachers who have a chronic pattern of absence.

But school acquisition of equipment can have unexpected consequences. School purchase of copy machines from a disreputable salesperson in Cleveland resulted in a lack of copier service (senior administrator).

Evidence suggests that respondents did not view school-based management as a device intended to save money by reducing the cost per pupil in their districts. Retrenchment was used as a cost savings mechanism. While savings did occur, decision scope became constrained. The ability to carry forward surpluses and expend them on items as needed was viewed very positively. The idea was expressed that principals tried to use resources wisely. Moreover, a greater awareness of costs on the part of school personnel was attributed to decentralization.

Cost Increases

One of the possible problems of any educational change is the cost incurred by the 'new way of doing things'. Such potential costs of school-based management appear in two main forms — school administrator workload and teacher time.

Workloads on the part of principals and vice-principals may have increased, although one Edmonton principal reported that most large secondary schools had bookkeepers. An elementary principal in the same district said that the extra work created by school-based management was justified. He had secretaries to help with the paperwork. A junior secondary principal in Edmonton agreed that the work was justified, saying that

> Some would call [decentralization] management; I would call it leadership.

His remark suggests that the principal's job requires much more than the supervision of paperwork. However, he noted that the accounting function in his school is not automated. A statement of expenditures is received from 'central services', usually about ten days after the end of each month.

> We must scrutinize it closely because we find costly errors, some of which can occur on a monthly basis.

Another Edmonton principal, in this case senior secondary, noted that his business manager keeps her own manual accounts by hand even though monthly printouts are received from 'downtown'. This is because the central office reports are not as up-to-date as the school's, and current information is needed. He said that the accuracy of the information from downtown was 'now pretty good'.

Remarkably, this principal's view on the workload issue diverged from his counterparts. He explained that in his school with a budget of about $2.8 million, there was *not* a significant increase in workload for him when school-based management was instituted. This was because once the goals were set for the next year, they determined the staffing, which is 80 per cent of the budget. The remaining 20 per cent, some of which is fixed (such as utilities) requires less work. He said that the accounts set up for funds generated by the school were more work than those established via decentralization.

A senior administrator in Cleveland said

> The paperwork is now done in the schools.

He added that the schools asked

> Do you [the central office] still need all those clerks?

A Langley secretary's observations provide some additional information about administrative processes under school-based management. She observed that in order for the school to acquire a piece of equipment, such as a filing cabinet,

> the teacher fills out the requisition;
> the requisition is processed by the secretary;
> the principal approves the requisition;
> the secretary sends the requisition to the central office;
> the district office requests the item from central stores or puts a bid to tender;
> the item is delivered sometime later;
> the invoice is processed by the secretary; and
> the teacher acknowledges receipt of the item.

Reflecting on the time taken and work involved, she said

> Too bad we couldn't just write cheques instead of going through the paperwork process.

She added,

> It would be cheaper and faster in some cases to pick up equipment at an auction or close-out sale.

Some other evidence suggests that principal workloads are clearly affected. Alexandruk's (1985) comment concerning time demands is:

> Respondents expressed a view that school budgeting is a time consuming process for teachers and principals and that it has an impact on instructional and teacher preparation time. Comments from teachers and principals indicate that there is insufficient time allocated to the planning and budget preparation process... Principals' responses indicate a need for additional administrative time allocation, and that this is being achieved via the budgeting process in the allocation of resources within the school. (p. 113)

Level of stress was Alexandruk's fourth most-mentioned weakness of school-based management by principals. He elaborates on this factor.

> The increased stress level was perceived [by both principals and teachers] as resulting from: the added responsibilities experi-

> enced by teachers and principals; the in-school conflicts arising from competition among departments or subject areas for school resources; the competition among schools for students to secure enrolments, and, therefore, funds; the suspicion and fear resulting from insecurity created by changing economic conditions generally; and the internal conflicts arising from administrative practices of principals in the preparation and administration of school's budgets. (p. 114)

There is also some evidence that school-based management may contribute to costs by absorbing teacher time. Alexandruk (1985) reports that when teacher respondents were asked for the *weaknesses* of school-based management, the leading problem perceived by both principals and teachers was the 'time factor', time spent in the planning process which might have been allocated more directly to classroom work. Another possible cost was the weakness of school-based management ranked third by teachers, called the 'stress factor' (p. 112). It seems that the respondents to the Alexandruk study associated stress with school-based management, perhaps in the process of determining priorities within their schools.

Does the new office technology reduce workloads? A Langley principal found computer help to be useful for revisions in the planning process:

> . . . initially, getting set up for decentralized decision making in this school was very time consuming. However, after my budgetary spreadsheet was made up, things were much easier . . . Budgeting revisions at this point take very little time.

An Edmonton junior secondary principal explained how he used an adapted spreadsheet called the 'B Plan' which has all components of a budget, including unit costs, built in. Knowing his total allocation, he simulates three or four different budgets and produces a printout for each. These are then shared with his school coordinators. During one year of extensive timetable changes, many simulations were run. His view of the new technology was that

> it eliminates a lot of the hand calculation we would need to do.

However, since his microcomputer is now linked to the central computer downtown, he noted that it would be much more convenient if he could call up the district mainframe and query the current status of accounts such as those for certificated or substitute teachers. Another Edmonton principal explained that some schools use the spreadsheet

provided by the district to formulate their school budgets. They then send the floppy disk to the central office. Other schools work with their budgets and submit them on paper. He noted that there have been problems interfacing the microcomputer information with the district mainframe. An Edmonton vice-principal mentioned that the new technology with its monthly reporting system helps make school-based management work. However, he added that

> You can still have tremendous problems finding a clear picture of where you are financially.

Generally, workloads for administrators appear to have increased, although many appeared to be willing to accept the additional burden. Teachers also indicated that they had additional planning responsibilities. The new office technology appears to make a contribution in alleviating some of the workloads under decentralization. However, not all school administrations are automated and it seems that some principals feel they can rely on district automated accounting while others do not.

Student Access to Resources

Most interviewees did not associate school-based management with either an increase or decrease in the educational opportunities afforded students. But some suggested that equality of access was enhanced by the 'dollar follows the child' rule.

Corcoran (1985) reports that the Superintendent of Peace River South, Charlie Parslow, perceived an imbalance among schools in resources for staffing, equipment and supplies prior to school-based management. Apparently,

> the principals who could write the best budget submissions inevitably received the most money for their schools. (p. 30)

A senior administrator in Cleveland recounted that as a principal prior to school-based management,

> People knew me and knew that I was principal of the school where the daughter of the Board President was enrolled . . . There were other principals who could get nothing.

One Langley principal suggested that diversities of school activities will reduce equality.

> As each school builds upon its needs, schools will become less equal.

The remark about 'less equal' may be interpretable as 'less alike'. This principal also believed that under centralized management, the idea of equity may lead to wasted dollars.

Interviewees often mentioned with certainty that they did not want to return to 'squeaky-wheel budgeting'. Many regarded the resource allocation mechanism as equitable, but some dissented. Results from Alexandruk (1985) corroborate the disagreement found among the interviewees. A teachers' representative said:

> Despite all of the changes which have been made to allocation formulae, the feeling still persists that some schools are better off than others . . .

The small amount of evidence presented here does not provide a certain response to the student equity question attached to school-based management. Most of those interviewed perceived resources to be allocated to schools more equitably. Yet, some inequalities were noted.

It is difficult to say from the evidence provided on perceptual cost reductions and cost increases just what the net effect of decentralization in school districts is. Global savings are not effected, but some monies are saved and deployed for other purposes. Cost awareness is raised, but loads on personnel are greater. Students may receive access to resources more equitably under decentralization.

Processes Linking Inputs to Outputs

There are many processes operating in schools which are intended to link resource inflows to learning outcomes. While the input/output connection is seldom tightly bound, activities to join them may be explored. First, some general actions are investigated. Second, particular activities intended to enhance learning are reported. Third, the leader-technician issue, seen as an outcome of managing school resources, is presented.

General Actions

A number of actions may be taken to augment learning outcomes, directly or indirectly. Such actions include the acquisition of equip-

193

ment, expenditures on professional development for teachers, and the movement of personnel from central offices to schools.

One set of respondents' comments addressed need for equipment. A Langley principal stated in general terms that

> There was an initial push for items that the staff was starved for . . . this District with a 'back-to-the-basics' history [was] starved for items from capital disproportionate[ly] to other districts.

Other respondents indicated that school-based goal setting and in-service education were examples of actions taken. One mentioned that he could 'funnel money into "Pro-D." and "inservice" as needed', or buy expert help.

In Edmonton prior to school-based management, there was a clause in the district collective agreement for teachers that $100,000 per year be allocated for teacher professional development. Since that money was allocated to schools in an unencumbered way under school-based management, there was some uncertainty as to the outcome for teachers' professional development. What happened? When the budgets for professional development were aggregated across the schools, the total amount was $400,000 (Edmonton Experience II, 1986). This outcome suggests that the professional development function was previously underfunded from a school perspective.

Another way in which school resources for learning may be examined is to consider the extent to which districts with school-based management have smaller district staffs. If a district is more school-based, then it might be expected that it would require a smaller proportion of personnel at the district level and more at the school level. Kellett (1987) compared four centralized districts with four matched decentralized ones (p. 80). When she polled the eight secretary-treasurers, seven responded. She reports that for the periods before and after the introduction of school-based management,

> [i]n all . . . no secretary-treasurers perceived a significant reduction of central office costs in either school-based managed or conventionally-managed districts and only one . . . in a school-based managed district . . . perceived a minor reduction in central office costs'. (p. 80)

However, such costs may not reflect a shift in resources accurately. She also examined expenditures on central office and school administrations, using audited financial statements from the districts. She

concluded that in the three pairs for which data were available, two school-based management districts showed a lower ratio of central office administrative costs to total administrative costs (Kellett, 1987, p. 93). While she notes a number of difficulties in matching districts and in working with data which changed format during the period when comparisons were made, Kellett's results point tentatively to the outcome that districts which adopt school-based management have seen minor shifts in administrative and support personnel proportions from the district office to the schools.

It appears that school-based management may result in processes which are intended to facilitate learning directly or indirectly (as with the acquisition of equipment or the professional development function). While it is not clear just what functions were reduced, some shift in personnel from district offices to schools was indicated.

Resources Suited to Specific Tasks

One aspect of school-based management is the ability to deploy resources to 'do what you want to do'. Here are a number of examples of how schools committed resources for learning.

A Langley principal gave a particular example of how he had worked out a special arrangement with a part-time secretary. The agreement was to have the secretary work full-time during school opening, reporting, closing and other peak periods in exchange for time off during non-peak periods, a more suitable use of secretarial time. Prior attempts to implement this arrangement had failed under the centralized administration.

One Langley principal wanted more resources to be devoted to teaching:

> We conserve supplies and take better care of the building in order to divert money into the teaching personnel account.

A more extensive example was provided by an Edmonton principal who took advantage of a $30,000 surplus from the previous year. Her operating budget was approximately $750,000 that year, so the surplus represented about 4 per cent above the allocation. The school had twenty teachers, twenty support staff, 125 regular and twenty special education students, many with severe disabilities. After extensive consultations with the staff and district specialists, the surplus was spent to

(a) Update the library with its 'fifty-year old books on Africa'.

(b) Purchase materials specified in the provincial social studies, science curriculum guides.

(c) Purchase physical education equipment, including snow-shoes.

(d) Provide three more microcomputers with software and some release time for teacher familiarization.

(e) Send teachers *and aides* to conferences, workshops, and in-service training.

(f) Provide two half-days per year substitute time for teacher interschool visits and special education aides.

A Cleveland principal provided a similar list of expenditures also mainly targeted for learning:

(a) Support tools for the California Test for Basic Skills.

(b) Artists in residence for brief periods.

(c) A resource teacher presenter for students.

(d) Two field trips per student per year.

When asked about the importance of these expenditures, she said simply,

> If teachers don't have the resources to teach, how are they going to get the job done?

Clearly, she was able to control resources for her students. But this was not always the case.

Several interviewees observed that under centralized management, the maintenance of excess stocks of equipment and supplies was once a commonly-occurring way of overcoming prospective shortages. They suggested that such practices have been reduced considerably and were quick to recall anecdotes of events and conditions in their districts prior to school-based management. In Edmonton, there was a central office administrator whose main task was to process requests for telephones in schools. This person was not replaced after retirement when school-based management was instituted. Further, the central office received an inquiry from the manager of the telephone utility. Why had so many schools discontinued so much of their telephone service (Edmonton Experience II, 1986)?

A Cleveland senior administrator observed that before school-based management, schools ordered supplies and if they were not received, did without. All schools could do was ask. Equipment was backordered frequently. Further,

> Overordering by ten, fifteen or twenty copies was common. Schools did not care. Now, principals are alert. Their view is that 'It is my dollar I am spending'.

Another anecdote from Cleveland was that one of the original pilot schools with an enrollment of 1600 found 90,000 business-sized envelopes in its storage. The supply would have been sufficient for fifty-five mailings for each student during the school year.

The evidence suggests that resources may be used to accomplish tasks seen as important by school personnel. Some of those jobs include personnel and material for learning. Interviewees thought the need to hoard supplies was reduced or eliminated.

The Leader-Technician Issue

One of the issues raised in the small literature on decentralization per se was the extent to which principals were required to emphasize their technical skills at the expense of their leadership role. An Edmonton vice-principal tackled the leader/technician problem in this way:

> If one looks at school-based management as just paper shuffling, one can become obsessed with the task.

Moreover, he asserted

> It will not turn a non-enactive leader into an enactive leader.

A Langley principal suggested that the leadership and technician roles are 'both true to a certain extent'. He supported the idea that school-based management could produce a 'latent accountant', whereby a principal already predisposed to technical matters may find an opportunity to work more with numbers than with people and priorities. However, he added that the central office had done much to reduce the time taken for budgeting and accounting by reducing the difficulties associated with completing forms.

An Edmonton principal simply said that he feels more of an educational leader than prior to the institution of school-based management when decisions could not be made at the school level regarding staff or equipment. Another stated simply,

> I'm not into accounts. We do not need a $60,000 a year accountant to run a school.

A third principal in Edmonton observed that he deliberately stayed away from computer technology. He added,

> I have trouble booting a unit up. I don't want to spend my time this way; I want to work with people. I can have others generate the printouts.

A senior administrator in Cleveland said this about school leadership:

> If a principal is willing to take risks, he or she can have an influence on a school.

But a school board member in Edmonton asked where the leadership responsibility of over 200 central office consultants lies. Are principals expected to be 'on top of' every subject area? He stated it is possible that too many elements of education are left to the school.

As substantiated by the above remarks, principals interviewed generally felt that their leadership opportunities had increased under school-based management. While technical demands had also increased, few made complaints about the time demands incurred. The leadership/tecnician question seemed not to be a major concern to those interviewed.

Summary

General activities aimed at learning outcomes (directly or indirectly) included greater amounts of resources for capital acquisitions, professional development, and the movement of some personnel from central offices to schools. A number of examples of school decisions to aid learning were shown. Schools under decentralization may feel less need to hoard supplies. As a result of managing school resources, principals say that they feel more like educational leaders than technicians.

Indicators of Output

Unfortunately, evidence on changes in learning outcomes was not available from Edmonton. There are no yearly examinations mandated and no results were available to bridge the years before and after

school-based management was instituted. In Langley, where testing is conducted regularly, it was considered too early to determine learning effect changes since the district adopted school-based management wholly in September 1985. During an interview in January 1988, Superintendent Emery Dosdall stated that there is no 'hard evidence' that learning outcomes have increased in Langley since the institution of decentralized decision-making. However, he pointed out that the processes which most likely affect learning altered: principals' ability to make decisions about resources has increased and teachers now participate in decisions about resources for learning.

Output defined as learning outcomes may be the most valid indicator of productivity for schools, but the satisfaction with that output is another way in which productivity may be conceived. Parents and students may be seen as consumers or investors in its service. Since students are required by law to attend school, they do not have the option of accepting or refusing the service. However, their satisfaction with the service which schools offer them may be taken as an indicator of the quality and quantity of school productivity. As reported in chapter 10 on accountability, the annual survey of students, parents, and staff by Edmonton provides measures of satisfaction as shown by a variety of groups and levels within the district. Fortunately, the survey was administered from 1979 to 1985, except for 1984. Patterns of satisfaction with the district services may be traced from before and after the fall of 1980, when school-based management was instituted for almost all schools.

Palmer and Mosychuk (1983) have provided some information on district-wide patterns of satisfaction from 1979 to 1983. This period is assumed to be sufficiently long to observe changes in the level of satisfaction if evident. Palmer and Mosychuk note that depending on sample size, a change of two or three percentage points is significant at the 0.05 level, which means the change would only occur by chance one time out of twenty. Some excerpts from their report (p. 3 and 4) are:

> . . . the satisfaction levels of Elementary . . . students with schooling has remained high and stable . . . results for Junior High and Senior high students show increases [in satisfaction] for almost all areas.

These junior and senior secondary areas were

> the usefulness of the school courses; the emphasis on basic skills such as reading, writing, math; the amount the students feel

> that they are learning and; the manner in which student discipline is handled.
>
> Parental satisfaction showed 'regular' increases for
>
> the vocabulary/spelling/grammar component of language arts; second language programs; the manner in which student discipline is being handled; the amount of say that they have in school decisions that affect their child and; the assistance provided by the school in planning for the child's further education and career.

Staff levels of satisfaction remained generally stable with notable increases in selected areas. Some examples were:

> Communication throughout the District (16 percentage points) . . . recognition and appreciation for performance (16 points) . . . District communicating its goals, philosophies and policies clearly (20 points).

It may be useful to report some of the survey results from Palmer and Mosychuk (1983) more directly (pp. 7–35). Since the satisfactions of parents and students may be more critical indicators of output than that of staffs, the results for student and parent groups are summarized here.

Levels of satisfaction were recorded on a variety of items from 1979 to 1983, each expressed as a percentage of persons who answered that they were satisfied with some aspect of school performance. It is possible to tally the number of items which show a positive, zero, or negative trend. This was done by assuming that a 3 per cent difference would be significant at the 0.05 level, as Palmer and Mosychuk did. Items were then classified into those which showed a gain of 3 per cent or more, those which varied between 2 per cent and –2 per cent, and those which showed a decline of 3 per cent or more. Outcomes are presented in table 5.

When the results for elementary schools are examined, data from kindergarten to grade six showed student satisfaction indicators with three trends up, thirteen no change, and one down. Parents, however, registered eleven up, twelve no change, and none down. Elementary students showed very little increase in satisfactions over the period, but their parents were much more positive since their 'advances led declines' by an 11-to-0 margin.

Junior secondary school results are rather different from the elementary. Students in grades seven to nine registered twenty-four

Table 5: Changes in Levels of Parental and Student Satisfaction with Edmonton Public Schools: 1979 and 1983[1]

Direction of Movement	Up[2]	No Change[3]	Down[4]
Elementary (K-6) Indicators			
Students	3	13	1
Parents	11	12	0
Junior Secondary (7–9) Indicators			
Students	24	0	0
Parents	16	0	0
Senior Secondary (10–12) Indicators			
Students	21	5	0
Parents	16	9	3
Total Indicators: All Schools			
Students	48	18	1
Parents	43	21	3
Grand Total: All Indicators: 134	91	39	4
Percentages: All Indicators: 100	68	29	3

Notes: 1 *Source*: Palmer and Mosychuk (1983)
2 More than 2 per cent up
3 Between 2 per cent up and 2 per cent down
4 More than 2 per cent down

items up, and none for flat or down, a very strongly positive pattern. Parents gave levels of satisfaction with sixteen items up and none for flat or down. Both sets show quite positive trends in satisfaction over the period, but students indicated greater increases than parents. Again, advances led declines, this time for both groups.

Senior secondary school results are similar to their junior counterparts. Grade ten to twelve students' trends were twenty-one up, five flat, and none down, a pattern which is very positive. Secondary parents did not mirror their children's satisfaction fully, showing sixteen up, nine flat, and three down. Overall, 68 per cent of indicators showed a gain of 3 per cent or more, 29 per cent were 'stable', and 3 per cent showed a decline of 3 per cent or more.

Many items show a marked improvement (as noted by Palmer and Mosychuk above), while the largest downward trend for the district was the senior secondary students' answer to the item 'The organization of the school year (Semester, 10-month, etc)' which declined from 92 per cent to 84 per cent satisfaction. Overall, it is quite evident that students and parents were more satisfied with the educational services in 1983 (three years after school-based management was implemented) than in 1979 (when only seven pilot schools were 'under school-based management'). It is not possible to guarantee that the observed differences were a result of the institution of school-based management, however.

Table 6: Levels of Parental Satisfaction Shown by Single, Global Indicators for the Edmonton Public Schools: 1979 and 1983

Satisfaction	Percent 1979	Percent 1983	Percentage Point Change
Elementary Parents	95	97	+2
Junior Secondary Parents	91	95	+4
Senior Secondary Parents	93	95	+2
Total Weighted Parents	94	96	+2

Source: Palmer and Mosychuk (1983)

The data gathered by the Edmonton surveys have a number of features worth noting. One is that the typical question shows that 95 per cent of persons who responded to it as satisfied. Even if the expected curve of satisfaction, which ranges from not satisfied to very satisfied (four categories), is skewed so that most persons are to be found on the upper end it is still remarkable that satisfactions reported have been increased to such high levels. It should be much easier to move from 70 per cent to 71 per cent than it is to move from 90 per cent to 91 per cent because the latter 1 per cent are much more difficult to please. These results suggest that Edmonton has been fairly successful at attaining a high level of satisfaction with the people it serves.

Overall, the results from the 1983 Edmonton survey show that the level of satisfaction is quite high among parents and students in Edmonton. However, it is possible to probe a little more into this measure of output. Palmer and Mosychuk's (1983) data were examined for the differences they show between 1979, the year before the district-wide implementation of school-based management, and 1983, three years later, a time when it might be expected that the results of decentralization would be known to parents. A global question was asked of all parents: 'Generally, are you satisfied with your child's school?' Elementary parents registered 95 per cent satisfaction in 1979 and 97 per cent in 1983, a significant increase of two percentage points. Junior secondary moved from 91 per cent to 95 per cent, an increase of four percentage points during that time span. And senior secondary parents changed from 93 per cent to 95 per cent, an increase of two percentage points in satisfaction. The total weighted parent sample moved from 94 per cent to 96 per cent. It is possible that these changes reflect the institution of school-based management. A summary of these data is provided in table 6.

Another data set was provided by Palmer and Mosychuk (1984) and was based on a random sample of Edmontonian households. They

mailed questionnaires with telephone follow–ups, receiving a response rate of 82 per cent for a total of 378 responses. They found that 91 per cent of parents were 'very or somewhat' satisfied with 'The overall education offered by the Edmonton Public Schools' (p. 18). Their results are not as favourable as the larger survey's outcomes for 1983 (96 per cent), but they are still quite high. As for non-parents, 506 (78 per cent) were satisfied. However, the non-parents were self-selected as 'public school supporters', and as a consequence, may not be representative of non-parents in general.

Edmonton schools are situated in the wider context of Canadian schools. Has the level of support for schools in Canada increased with Edmonton's level of satisfaction? No. Surveys were conducted by Gallup Poll Limited for the Canadian Educational Association (1984) for 1979 and 1984, one year later than the Edmonton results. Assuming that year's difference is not critical, let us examine how 2109 persons rated public schools for those two years. It is presumed that ratings of A, B, or C are equivalent to 'satisfied', while D or F are similar to 'dissatisfied'. When corrected for non-respondents, in 1979 90 per cent rated schools an A, B, or C, while 10.2 per cent said they would give schools a D or an F. Perhaps remarkably, the 1984 outcomes are the same — 90 per cent and 10 per cent respectively, showing that the standing of public schools across Canada was stable for the five-year period (p. 46). Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare the ratings of parents and non-parents across years, since they were not polled separately in 1979. This stable outcome may be contrasted to parental satisfaction in Edmonton, which is somewhat higher. However, non-parents in the Canadian Educational Association poll gave a level of support of level of 89 per cent, a non-significant difference from the parents. A partial explanation for this outcome may be the global nature of the measure — parents gave more As and non-parents more Cs. Yet non-parents' support for Canadian schools was considerably higher than that of non-parents in Edmonton (see table 7 for a summary).

Are the Edmonton results comparable to those from the United States? Each year Gallup provides a benchmark for American education, the Gallup survey reported in the Phi Delta Kappan. Let us examine similar results for the same time span as those in Edmonton. Gallup (1979) is based on a sample of 1514 structured interviews (p. 35). As with the Canadian poll, if the ratings of A, B, and C may be interpreted the same as 'satisfied', and D and F understood to mean 'dissatisfied', then an examination of the public school parental results shows that 80 per cent were satisfied and 17 per cent dissatisfied for that

Table 7 Satisfaction of Parents with Schools in Edmonton, across Canada, and in the United States 1979 and 1983 or 1984

	Percent 1979	Percent 1983	Percent 1984	Percentage Point Change
Edmonton Public Schools Survey[1]	94	96	—	+2
Canadian Educational Association Gallup Survey[2]	90	—	90	0
United States Gallup Survey[3]	82	73	—	−9

Notes: 1 Palmer and Mosychuk (1983)
2 Canadian Educational Association (1979 and 1984)
3 Gallup (1979 and 1983)

year. When the outcomes are corrected for the non-respondents, then 82 per cent are satisfied and 18 per cent dissatisfied of all persons who answered the question. These show a much *lower* level of satisfaction than the Edmonton parents at 94 per cent in 1979. A look at the Gallup (1983) results (based on 1540 interviews) shows that 73 per cent of parents were satisfied and 27 per cent dissatisfied when corrected for non-respondents (p. 36). Since the Edmonton datum was 96 per cent in 1983, it appears that Edmonton showed a *small increase* when American parents showed a *marked decline* in the level of satisfaction with their schools. When Gallup asked parents without children in schools to rate them, their responses matched the public school parents' that year. While it is not possible to compare nonparental responses across the time span, it appears that nonparents in Edmonton were more satisfied with their schools than was generally the case in America in 1983. Table 7 summarizes these trends.

It is easy to attribute the results as being a certain indication that school-based management has resulted in increasing levels of parental satisfaction with schools. However, there are a number of reservations about these results which should be noted. One attribute of the Edmonton, Canadian Educational Association and Gallup surveys is that they are responses from populations of people who change. While the staff responses may be considered polls of the same persons across different years, the students and their parents clearly are not. Virtually no elementary student or parent polled in 1979 would have responded to the same poll in 1983. If they were polled, they would have been included in the junior secondary group. The outcome of the age-grade progression is that when comparisons are made across four years apart (though not adjacent years) entirely different groups are being asked for their levels of satisfaction with the schools. While data from adjacent

years tend to support the patterns reported for the four-year span, it is also proper to ask if new generations of parents might have been more satisfied with schools than their predecessors.

What do these comparisons tell us? While they are subject to the vagaries of survey data collected over time, they reflect Edmonton's performance as a unit and also relative to other Canadian schools. Parental satisfaction with schools in Edmonton was higher than in the rest of Canada. It also increased slightly after decentralization while comparable figures for Canada remained constant. Parental satisfaction with public schools in the United States was much lower initially and then showed a substantial decline during the same period. Since Edmonton is embedded in the North American context, it may be suggested that the introduction of school-based management had an impact on the satisfaction of parents there.

Summary

Resource inputs for schools in decentralized districts were considered in the forms of cost reductions and cost increases, and student access. While outright savings were not apparent, both cost reductions and cost increases were evident. Student access to educational resources may be enhanced. Personnel were able to pursue some general activities (such as professional development) and take many specific actions which they believed to be linked directly or indirectly to student learning. As managers, principals felt they were educational leaders. With regard to output indicators, data on learning outcomes were lacking but results based on satisfaction of students and parents were positively associated with school-based management.

Chapter 12

How Does the Change to School-based Management Progress?

According to the triphasic model, planned change may be divided into adoption, implementation, and continuation. Adoption is a much too extensive a story to be reported fully in this volume: a dissertation is under way to investigate the entire change process for school-based management (Ozembloski, 1987). However, key elements of the adoption process are included here. Implementation is the main focus of this inquiry while continuation is mostly a subject for later studies. After adoption is examined, implementation of decentralization is reported in more detail with a focus on preparations, pilot programs and difficulties encountered.

Districts encountered decentralization rather differently. For Edmonton, the experience was a gradually unfolding one with many exchanges of views. Caldwell (1977), in his dissertation written when school-based management was in the adoption phase, summarizes some of the deliberations which attended the adoption of decentralization in Edmonton. Proposals reflected

> . . . a strong difference of opinion among central office personnel on the merits of further decentralization. The strong interest of the Superintendent and other senior administrators was contrasted with varying degrees of concern among subject supervisors and persons in the Finance and School Facilities Departments. The views of educators in the schools also varied. (p. 412)

Langley's initial experience was not the same. Taylor (1987) indicates the general process followed in Langley; the Board first became aware of the 'problem' in 1979; next, the Board sought the services of an expert and interest in decentralization was heightened; the Board later hired a new superintendent who was a former assistant

superintendent in Edmonton (Emery Dosdall); a commitment was then made to decentralization (p. 33).

The background to the adoption of school-based management in Cleveland is quite distinct from the other two districts. Reported in Cleveland (1982), decentralization came about because of a United States District Court, Northeastern District of Ohio, Eastern Division order to desegregate issued on 6 February 1978 (p. 2). As a consequence, the District Court ordered the Superintendent of Public Instruction to file a plan for desegregation which encompassed the decentralization of the Cleveland Public Schools. The rationale, as quoted by Cleveland (1982) was

> The decentralization of the system should provide the building principals with a vital role in staff selection and evaluation, resource allocations and building accountability. An abundance of educational research confirms that the vital element in student achievement is the building principal. Providing principals with the resources to perform needed tasks must be a major priority of the unitary and decentralized system.

A decentralization order was filed with the Court in 1982 and a pilot group of schools was established.

Key Roles in Adoption

The process of adoption appears to have been influenced strongly by persons occupying strategic positions in their respective districts. In Edmonton, the experience is overshadowed by the character of the Superintendent, discussed first. Then, key figures and positions in the other districts are presented.

Caldwell (1977), in his investigation of school-based management in Edmonton, asked interviewees about the key factor underlying the adoption of decentralization. He reports:

> The most frequently identified factor was the [set of] management strategies of the Superintendent based on his philosophy and perception of problems with existing practice. The Superintendent explained his decision by noting that a relatively centralized budgetary system, which had proved satisfactory in former times, was now attempting to meet the needs of over 150 different schools in a much larger system with little organized input from persons at the school level. He felt that

> these different needs could not be met in a meaningful way until the budget process was changed . . . He considered that the school-based budget . . . was an appropriate vehicle for obtaining this kind of input. (p. 413)

Strembitsky was apparently supported in his views by Parry (1976), whose report on Edmonton is summarized by Caldwell (1977, p. 416):

> . . . [S]ubject supervisors were held responsible and accountable for programs, but principals were responsible for the deployment of staff, representing ninety percent of school budgets. (p. 416)

Many interviewees in this inquiry asserted that in Edmonton, the 'driving force' behind school-based management was (and continued to be) Michael Strembitsky, the Superintendent. While it is presumptuous to try to offer any real understanding of this person whose reputation is something of a legend in western Canada and beyond, it is possible to present a few insights gleaned from his presentations and interviews with others who know him.

Many interviewees described Strembitsky as visionary, a person with firmly-held convictions who is able to translate those beliefs into action by working with people. Perhaps most apparent are some of his beliefs about individuals. He says that they want to be creative at their work and not simply 'put in time'. He believes in the 'potential of people'. He thinks that they would like to participate in a cause greater than themselves. He believes that they would like the chance to succeed. With these convictions as groundwork, he then adds others about how people respond to leadership.

Strembitsky's assumptions about leadership include the idea that

> People become what you think they are.

This comment suggests that personnel respond to expectations, high or low. He also said that

> There is no such thing as a quality decision without dollar implications.

and,

> Money has the power to shape behaviour and get results.

Thus, resources are central to human motivation. He acknowledges that working with people requires difficult decision-making:

> When it comes to crucial decisions on personnel, show compassion and create problems.

And when undertaking change, his rule is to effect change so that

> They think they did it themselves.

Another level of beliefs can be added to ones concerning individuals and leadership. The third stratum addresses organizations.

Stembitsky's views on organizations are rather disparate, but many aspects of his drive to establish decentralization seem to reflect them. One belief is that he perceives the differences between the private and public sectors' effectiveness or efficiency to be less noteworthy today than it once was. However, he has difficulty with the word 'management'; it suggests mundane matters to him and so he prefers 'program planning' or 'school budgeting' to 'school-based budgeting'. He insists that all organizational entities want achievement, although managers want power, too. He believes that important outcomes of organizational decisions can be measured. And he favours gradual over precipitous change.

As a consequence of these three tiers of beliefs, Strembitsky has organizational aspirations which reflect them. They include a work setting characterized by mutual trust and honesty, where 'the committed feel at ease', where common information exists (this is a 'oneness, or total sharing of information'), and where problems and opportunities are perceived as 'win-win' and not 'win-lose'. More globally, his aim is to establish a setting where

> The organization fosters people working together.

The Langley Superintendent, Emery Dosdall, is also credited by interviewees in his district with being the prime force behind school-based management there. In Peace River North, Stevens (1987) reports that

> The trustees were responsible for the introduction of decentralization to [the district]. In particular, the Chairman of the Board was the 'driving force.' It was noted that the Superintendent was not the person to suggest it, nor was he an enthusiastic supporter of the idea. However, he did not work against the pilot and he eventually delegated the responsibility for the implementation of the pilot to the Assistant-Superintendent. (p. 64)

In Fort Nelson, Corcoran (1985) notes that it was the secretary-treasurer who took considerable initiative in bringing the ideas about

school-based management to other administrators in the district (p. 33). He also requested that a pilot project be implemented. The request was approved by the Board but delayed because of province-wide retrenchment.

Interestingly, Cleveland has an absence of reports of individual leadership on behalf of decentralization. Having undergone five superintendents in five years, the main thrust appears to have come from the Court order to desegregate and the willingness of the district administration to comply (senior administrator).

The use of key secondary roles was observed in Edmonton, Langley, the rural districts, and Cleveland. In Edmonton, heavy responsibilities for the development and implementation of school-based management (such as the construction of the allocation mechanism) were delegated to senior lieutenants. Langley and Cleveland identified a person as chief developer and facilitator. The lieutenants interviewed all expressed their full commitment to their tasks, enthusiasm for the principles behind them, and a considerable amount of pride in their accomplishments. The Superintendent of Langley, Emery Dosdall, believes that

> you have got to have somebody who is the *keeper of the vision*.

The superintendents are credited with being the prime forces behind decentralization in Edmonton and Langley. In fact, interviewees suggested that they are the sine qua non of school-based management in those who districts. However, a different model of adoption was followed in one of the rural districts, where a board member or other senior administrator was credited with the leadership. Alternatively, Cleveland's move to decentralization was externally driven via a court order. In most districts, responsibility for implementation was delegated to senior administrators who appeared to pursue their roles vigorously.

Preparations

The adoption phase was also characterized by district engagement in preparation activities for all personnel who would be involved in change.

Preparations in Langley involved changing role descriptions of school trustees, senior administrative staff and principals. Information sessions were held which included planning, budgetary preparation, fiscal responsibilities, and control issues (Taylor, 1987, p. 33). There

210

was a considerable need for ideas on school-based management in the view of those responsible for the inservice education required. A literature search of the Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse database, and the attendance of some personnel at a conference on decentralization provided some initial information which was generally hard to find.

Emergy Dosdall, Superintendent in Langley, sees school-based management in Langley as faithful to many principles of decentralization as used in Edmonton. But when school-based management was introduced there, the term 'school-based budgeting' was used and focussed greatly on the financial aspects. However, in Langley during the year prior to implementation, board and school goals were emphasized and discussed widely. According to the Superintendent, the stress on goals then led naturally to the need for money to achieve them. He said that as a consequence, decentralization is perceived to be a change which involves planning with goals and resources and not just the financial part of budgeting.

Another main component in planning for decentralization is the allocation mechanism. During the first year that schools received their allocations on a per pupil basis in Langley, their total resources were made to fit closely to what each school already had. The rule was

> You reflect reality for the first year. (Dosdall interview)

While such a strategy may seem inequitable, it was seen as necessary for principals to become accustomed to the flexibility they had without introducing too many changes at once. During later years, allocations were shifted to more general formulas. The initial allocation mechanism for Langley was a simple one which did not take long to construct. When it was adapted later, it was done so at the request of principals, and the changes became 'their changes'. Dosdall noted that at the inception,

> the best allocation formula in the world would have failed.

Had an elaborate formula been devised initially, he believes it would not have been understood fully or accepted by the principals.

In Langley, the senior administration provided in-service workshops for principals concerning leadership styles, goal setting and the involvement of staff within school operations. District educational objectives were also used as a framework (Taylor, 1987, p. 24). However, a principal said that still more professional development could have helped. That concern was echoed by a number of interviewees.

211 S

A Langley principal noted that the Superintendent held retreats with the trustees. Another observed that the Superintendent's 'teas with teachers' in their schools helped to inform personnel about school-based management.

Stevens (1987) articulates the importance of having a working model as a facilitating factor during adoption:

> The Edmonton school district was . . . able to provide a model, resource people for in-service sessions on school-based management, and a living example of decentralization in action. It was felt that visiting the Edmonton system, to see it working, was of benefit to both supporters and skeptics alike. Observing the system firsthand and being able to discuss school-based management with those people involved aided in convincing those individuals opposed to decentralization of the viability of the idea. (p. 66)

A number of interviewees in Fort Nelson also noted how visits to Edmonton had helped their understanding of decentralization and how willing those in Edmonton were to share their views and experiences.

During the adoption period in Edmonton, a System Planner was appointed to guide the pilot program. Caldwell (1977) reports two main problems which this person faced:

> The difficulty in accomplishing change at the central office level as well as a change at the school level.
>
> The difficulty in providing schools with the information necessary for the preparation of budgets. (p. 437)

A considerable effort was made during the adoption phase. Information was gathered, an allocation mechanism was devised, personnel were made aware, and some were sent to an already decentralized district. However, the initial tasks of adoption were not all easy ones.

The Pilot Programs

Implementation of decentralization is presented as a set of topics addressing the pilot school programs in the districts, then some limited information on the post-pilot period, a look at opposition to the change and finally some results concerning the unexpected role of retrenchment.

All but one of the five districts included in the inquiry phased in

school-based management using the pilot concept — a few schools were placed under the structure first; others followed later. Here are some of the experiences recounted by interviewees in their respective districts.

Edmonton

Edmonton's pilot plan spanned the years from 1976 to 1980, when the pilot schools had personnel included in their budgets (The starting point for the Edmonton Public Schools was supplies, 2 per cent of the operating budget. Later, the equipment budget was decentralized). Seven schools were designated as pilots, spanning elementary and secondary schools, some specialized ones, large and small ones, and schools in different parts of the city. While thirty principals volunteered, they were not chosen because they were 'super people'. In fact, some of the seven were 'among the less outstanding' (Strembitsky, 1986).

A number of Edmonton pilot school experiences follow. Although they were restricted by legislation and collective agreements, they broke the rules of expenditure which were still operational for the remaining schools. Many of the seven did not believe the freedom which they were granted to make decisions (Strembitsky, 1986).

A second outcome of the pilot program was the heavy demand for information requested by the pilots. This information included data for their reporting systems and for their financial records.

Third, it was found that each school approached its decision-making differently. The district did not mandate decision making in a uniform way, though schools were required to involve their staffs. 'Find your own way' was the advice (*ibid*). One senior administrator commented that the provision of a model for staff participation would have been contrary to the idea of decentralization — it would not have been consistent to give schools the freedom to involve their staffs but then tell them how to do it.

Fourth, Strembitsky (1986) told the story of one principal who hoped for promotion to another school at the end of the year. But during the year, his school became one of the pilots. The principal then declined his promotion. When interviewed by the superintendent and asked why he had forsaken a new set of opportunities, his response was 'I can't let those people down'. It appears that the ability to make plans and decisions, which pilot school status afforded him, had generated a great deal of commitment on the principal's part.

243

A fifth outcome was the novel requests made by pilot schools which were contrary to established practices. Although the previous allocation had been $150,000 for lockers district-wide, two pilot schools asked for $10,000 each *just for lockers*. Their requests were supported on the grounds of damage and the need for teacher supervision of lockers in their schools. Previously, electric typewriters of high quality were allocated only to the central office building. Schools were given a choice of manual typewriters. A pilot school requested an electric typewriter and justified its need. Prior to decentralization, audio-visual equipment was distributed to schools more or less uniformty. A pilot school argued for extra equipment because it had two storeys (*ibid*).

Sixth was the set of reactions on the part of the Board and central office when school budgets were encountered. One was

> When the seven pilots presented their budgets to the Board, the Board *got raw courage* from the front line. (*ibid*)

But Strembitsky added that there was also the concern that the Board was losing control, possibly because ordinarily, boards maintain control by 'counting things'. He said that hours can be spent on details which have nothing to do with the goals or mission of education. His view was that the Board was required to be reoriented to accept a long response time to their actions, akin to that of an oil tanker. To help counteract this feeling of lost control and low level of trust in schools,

> A community of support was needed. (*ibid*)

Seventh, the time came to adopt school-based management or not.

> The Finance Department said 'All go or no go.' (*ibid*)

School-based management was adopted district-wide for 1980/81 by a vote of the Edmonton Board.

Langley

Implementation experiences in Langley were similar to those in Edmonton. Some problems were revealed as well, some of which were attributed to the pilot program in Langley which lasted only one year before decentralization was adopted district-wide. This short time period led one Langley principal to recommend a two-year pilot program for other districts considering school-based management because the pilot schools provided in-service education in midyear. He

said it would have been helpful to have had one-and-a-half years of preparation instead of six months.

Some issues encountered by one secondary school principal in Langley during the pilot stage included those raised by staff members. They asked

> Why decentralize? Is this change for change's sake? How much staff involvement should there be? How time-consuming will it be? Will decentralization turn administrators into business managers? If schools receive more work, who at the board office will be doing less?

At one point, half the school staff was 'for' school-based management and the other half was 'against'. School-based management was perceived by some as a vehicle for retrenchment. For others, it was believed to be a path to collegiality (Langley principal).

Another Langley principal noted that during implementation,

> ten to fifteen per cent of my time each day was allocated towards planning . . .

This remark reflected the perception of a number of interviewees that during the first year of decentralization, the time required to master new administrative procedures was high.

The Rural Districts

Prior to the pilot program in Peace River North, the School-based Decision-making Committee was struck. It consisted of a school secretary, a teacher, a non-pilot-school principal, a trustee, the secretary-treasurer and the assistant superintendent. The Committee's mandate was to monitor the pilot, evaluate school-based management, and make a recommendation to the Board.

Stevens (1987) notes that the pilot program 'allowed for the development and refinement of the decentralization handbook' (p. 71). The Peace River North program involved voluntary schools which had democratically-oriented principals, according to one principal interviewed. Stevens notes that in Peace River North,

> . . . the support and enthusiasm of both the Secretary-Treasurer and the Assistant-Superintendent were identified as key internal factors to the successful implementation of the pilot. (*ibid*, p. 66)

Inhibitors to successful implementation encountered by Peace River North included the diversity of the district which had both large, urban and small, rural schools scattered across sizeable distances. Another was the lack of funding for implementation. However, a trustee responded to this last concern by saying that the pilot program was completed over a two-year period, allowing existing personnel to 'carry the load' (*ibid*, p. 68).

After interviewing principals and teachers in four schools in Peace River North, Coleman (1987) concluded that difficulties in implementing collegial decision-making and the time demands for participation in the planning process were problems which inhibited further change in those schools (p. 9).

In particular contrast to the other districts, the Peace River North Board decided *not* to implement school-based management district-wide at the end of the pilot. The reason was

> It was felt that decentralization had a greater chance of success if schools volunteered for it rather than having it forced upon them. (*ibid*, p. 85)

However, the Board did create a part-time position to facilitate the further implementation of school-based management.

In Nelson, five volunteer schools began as pilots in 1986/87. All seventeen schools were included in decentralization in 1987/88. No principals requested transfers except for one who was assigned as the person in charge of school-based management. This evidence may indicate satisfaction with the process of change there.

The pilot effort in Fort Nelson was initiated in this way:

> Our approach to [the pilot schools] was that they were the facilitators of $2 million. The challenge within the district was not to decentralize from one central office to twenty-six central offices. We wanted to have the community, parents, and teachers involved in appropriate ways. (Superintendent Garry Roth)

Cleveland

The pilot school program followed the decentralization plan. During the first year, 1983, six pilots were established. A committee of twelve principals was set up to guide the program. The numbers of schools included in school-based management were increased to thirty in 1984,

sixty in 1985, and 127 (all) in 1986. The process of doubling each year permitted schools to be paired, one experienced with decentralization and one not. During the pilot program, the Division of School Based Management was established to facilitate its implementation (Cleveland, 1986, p. 3). An external assessment of the program was conducted when there were six pilot schools. After interviewing the pilot principals, Parsons and Briggs Management Assistance (1983) said

> The School-Based Management Project has created a sense of excitement, interest, and renewed direction by pilot school principals. (p. 11)

However, the program presented some problems at that time. They also noted that some pilot principals

> expressed a concern for additional time to develop the concept and feel that more time is needed for planning, development, and debugging before complete implementation. (p. 6)

The Post-pilot Period

Some problems arose as districts changed from the pilot program to full-scale school-based management. Three central office persons left Edmonton.

> Some staff made career choices. (Strembitsky, 1986)

Principals were clearly affected. It was seen as necessary to 'hammer out' a role statement for principals in Edmonton. Two retired because of decentralization. In Langley, one interviewee noted that two principals declined to stay under school-based management. Some teachers were affected directly because school-level personnel specified what teachers would be retained and what ones would leave their schools. The outcome was that 400–500 teachers were moved each year. Every vacancy was advertised and surplus teachers went for interviews at prospective schools. Strembitsky (1986) observed that

> The same persons appear on the surplus lists year after year.

All but one district in this investigation mounted pilot programs which were used as a learning period for the personnel who participated in them. Those involved in the pilots became the sources of knowledge for others about to become involved in decentralization. Much experience was gained during this stage. Handbooks were developed;

information demanded; ideas shared; bugs fixed; support garnered; surprises encountered. Smaller districts were able to have pilot periods of shorter (one-year) lengths, although this rate of change may be quite rapid. The role of facilitators appears to have been critical, as it was in the preparation period. Each office, school, and indeed, person in the districts appears to have faced a 'need to know' about school-based management. Many questions were raised and many sources of information sought. Quite dramatically, those most affected were required to undergo considerable adjustments in their roles and thinking about administrative practices. For some, the change to decentralization was more than they could accommodate. For the rest, implementation meant the expenditure of effort and time to master the new processes and expectations.

Districts in this study proceeded with their pilot programs in rather similar ways. Overseeing committees were established and the experiments were evaluated. However, they diverged in their later strategies of implementation. Three moved to 100 per cent decentralization at once, one phased it in over three years, and one permitted schools to volunteer for school-based management.

Opposition

During adoption and implementation, a number of groups and individuals encountered difficulties and uncertainties (some of which are noted in the sections on preparations and pilot programs). These groups and individuals expressed their opposition to aspects of decentralization. Sources of potential opposition to the idea range from senior government to individual members of the public.

Interviewees were largely silent on the roles of senior governments, except for an Edmonton senior administrator who noted that the Ministry of Education permitted the district to move from calendar year to school year budgeting.

School board members were not unanimous in their support for school-based management. This was certainly true of the Edmonton Board, where some members questioned both the principles and outcomes of decentralization. However, it is clear that the majority of the Board supported the idea. One vice-principal in Edmonton even suggested that

> The Superintendent may control the Board.

This opinion was not substantiated by other interviewees.

Central office employees are another source of potential opposition. A Cleveland senior administrator recounted that

> The Business Department *fought like hell* for control of maintenance personnel within the clusters [of schools]. They specified work and hours. Their system required that district work be prioritized. As a result, the work was done very late — too late. One principal hired an outside person to paint the school exterior.

A Langley principal commented that

> Maintenance supervisors and secretary treasurers have the hardest time dealing with decentralization. But maintenance supervisors are actually made more powerful when a school asks for a specific individual's services.

What about principals? Do they show any opposition to school-based management? While the results from Alexandruk (1985) indicate their overwhelming support, not all may be enthusiastic. An Edmonton vice-principal noted that the district has had difficulty in having all leadership personnel accept and understand the principles of decentralization. He said that

> One comment from EPS administrators is a cliche: 'Educators should be concerned with education and not with management'.

Another Edmonton vice-principal observed that acceptance of school-based management is contingent on school size:

> The larger the school the greater the possibility for acceptance of decentralization.

He explained that this is because more discretionary income is available in larger schools. For instance, in one large school,

> $40,000 was spent on the staff room and did wonders for staff morale.

What about teachers and teachers' associations? A Langley principal noted that the local teachers' association argued to retain substitute teachers as a centralized service. However, the school staff wanted school decisions for local reasons. In sum,

> There is a power shift to teachers in the school.

In Nelson, Superintendent Bill Maslechko reported that decentralization was supported by the local teachers' association. A senior ad-

ministrator in Cleveland noted that no concerns had been expressed by the Cleveland Teacher's Union, which is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers. One reason may have been that the State law requires a minimum pupil-classroom teacher ration of 25:1 district-wide. The ratio includes homeroom and subject teachers, but not physical education, media or music teachers, or vice-principals.

What of issues raised by staff members and their unions? A union representative in Edmonton articulated her view of employer-employee relations in this way:

> Our administration has earned the respect and trust of the employees by making fair decisions regarding complaints which are presented whether the decision be in favor of the employee or not. . . . The formal grievance procedure is only used where a clear and definite violation of a contract has occurred. (letter)

However, not all groups are satisfied with school-based management, as shown by Somerville's (1985) paper, subtitled 'The case against'. He argues the benefits of decentralization have not been realized, it has disrupted the budgeting process, and it has resulted in changes that

> may be more damaging to the welfare of the district than [school-based management] itself.

A senior administrator in Cleveland noted that there have been no statements of concern from the support staff unions, such as the clerical or bus drivers'. Another mentioned explicitly that decentralization was designed *not* to abrogate any state law, court order, or union contract. Only one letter of inquiry (one step below a grievance) had been received in three and one half years. That complaint pertained to teacher participation in school budgeting.

Residual difficulties remain with some persons.

> Parents still ask the Board why a certain school would buy a copy machine. (Cleveland senior administrator)

He added,

> There is considerable discomfort with the freedom that schools have on the part of *some* in the community who regularly attend Board meetings.

According to Langley Superintendent Emery Dosdall, one way which districts could become recentralized is through the imposition of union contracts which have explicit rules in them (for example, the

requirement that each school have 1.5 librarians). He said that such contracts would have the same effect as centralized decision-making at the school board office.

Opposition to the adoption and implementation of school-based management appears to have been ameliorated in the districts studied. Concerns arose, perhaps from fears about losses of resources to persons or groups. The range of sources of opposition spans board members, central office personnel who may encounter loss of control of some functions, principals who do not all welcome decentralization sometimes because of small school size, teacher associations who may lose control of some functions, staff unions who may be concerned about job security and due process, and individual parents who may not accept the change. However, interviewees do not perceive opposition to have affected implementation greatly in the districts studied. One reason for this outcome is quite obvious; the districts were selected because of their institutionalization of school-based management.

Retrenchment

An unanticipated factor which created difficulties for the implementation of school-based management was the reduction in funding by ministries or departments of education. This development was stressed by many. Here are some of their reflections:

> School-based management was implemented in Edmonton during financially difficult times. From 1980–86, the pupil-teacher ratio rose from 16 to 17. A corresponding loss in teaching positions resulted with 401 reductions out of a total complement of 4300 from 1980/81 to 1985/86 (Edmonton Experience II, 1986).

However, retrenchment was felt much more severely by the districts in British Columbia than by Edmonton in Alberta. Taylor (1987) summarizes his interview results concerning retrenchment in this way:

> An overall feeling of skepticism, confusion and added pressure is how many Langley educators describe their feelings towards decentralized decision making. A great number of teachers had adopted very skeptical attitudes towards the government about cutbacks in public education throughout British Columbia. These feelings also seemed to be directed at decentralized decision-making. (p. 38)

A representative of the teachers association in Langley commented

> . . . some teachers were confused. . . . Decentralization and [retrenchment] came together . . .

One secondary principal in Langley said simply

> The biggest disadvantage of decentralization is that it was introduced when [retrenchment] was.

Stevens (1987) reports that in Peace River North, all respondents believed that the most important negative factor impinging on the decentralization pilot program was the provincial government's retrenchment program (p. 67).

Retrenchment not only concurred with school-based management but it may have magnified the role differences between teachers and principals accompanying decentralization. The Langley teachers association representation acknowledged that

> . . . decentralization puts a lot of the agony of [retrenchment] at the school level . . . there is much confusion over decentralized decision making and [retrenchment] . . . there may be an intensified conflict between teachers and administrators at the school level.

What were the reactions of schools to the combination of retrenchment and school-based management? A Langley principal commented on school-based management under retrenchment:

> . . . decentralization is a way to decentralize the agony.

Another mentioned that retrenchment was made less painful because if his school could find the dollars it did not cut priority areas. Taylor (1987) summarized the reactions about retrenchment he gleaned from his interviews in Langley:

> Although government retrenchment seemed to be a negative factor for the implementation of decentralized decision making in Langley, the overall feeling among those interviewed was that the flexibility that existed from [decentralization] gave them an advantage over schools in other districts in combatting the hardships of the government cutbacks. (p. 39)

The simultaneity of retrenchment and the change to school-based management meant that no extra resources were available for schools during the change process. Worse, resources and specifically, positions, were being lost. Teachers and others were confused as the troublesome

decisions were shifted to the schools. Some may have associated the potential outcomes of decentralization (including greater efficiency) with the definite outcomes of retrenchment (cost reductions). Yet, some reactions were rather positive, indicating that school personnel would rather reduce their numbers themselves than be told 'who should go'.

Summary

District experiences with the adoption of decentralization were varied. Some relied on the leadership of key persons; one adopted school-based management involuntarily. Extensive preparations were undertaken so that school and central office personnel could adapt to their new roles. Implementation began usually with a pilot school program and culminating in a decision to fully implement decentralization or not. Opposition from various sources was asserted. However, the change to decentralization continued. Difficulties with retrenchment were also encountered.

PART V: CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 13 is devoted to a discussion of what thoughts on structure have been gleaned from the data and looks backward to see how the data agree with ideas expressed in the literature. Chapter 14 continues the discussion on outcomes of decentralization: flexibility, accountability, productivity and change. It also features a reexamination of the anticipations about school-based management offered by those in centralized districts. The last chapter, number 15, provides some limitations of this modest inquiry, some one-line conclusions about decentralization in education, a reexamination of the conceptual syntesis, and then some speculations in which the reader is invited to indulge.

Chapter 13

Discussions and Reflections on the Structure of Decentralization

Many individuals have provided answers to the questions posed to them on decentralization. When individual reactions are combined with other data sources based on the same occurrences of school-based management, it is possible to offer a picture of the structure of district decentralization, to offer a precis of 'how the data spoke' in summary form. A precis of the generalizations also permits the literature on structure to be reexamined in light of the results of this inquiry. These two tasks are undertaken in this chapter.

Precis of Structure

The general form of school-based management is quite simple. Many planning and decision functions characteristically made at the district level are devolved to the schools. But it is school personnel and not parents who are given that decision making authority. As such, school-based management may be labelled 'organizational' rather than 'political' decentralization.

To what extent does decentralization take place? It is most clear from the evidence provided that a considerable proportion of district resources (dollar amounts) are directed to the schools. Moreover, the districts define school-based management so that school-level decisions are addressed by schools themselves.

Districts express their aims for decentralization in different ways, but they made goal statements intended to enable schools to be more effective, responsive, accountable and to link planning with resources. Such goals appear to reflect the belief that school personnel are sufficiently knowledgeable about local conditions to make appropriate

decisions. The structure which seems to fit school-based management rather well is Mintzberg's 'divisionalized form'.

As interpreted from documentation provided, school-based management has two key dimensions. One is the definition of authority and responsibility of those in various personnel roles. The district hierarchy is sharpened by the 'one boss rule', where each person has only one supervisor. Most importantly, authority and responsibility are largely brought together, particularly for the school principal, but also for others in the administrative structure.

The other dimension of school-based management is the scope of decision-making which is permitted for schools. When the instances are examined in turn, it is found that Edmonton exhibits a considerable range of decisions made by schools. These may be stated, roughly in the order of occurrence. They include supplies, equipment, personnel, maintenance, utilities and consultant services, the last being on an experimental basis. Langley and the rural districts exhibit a similar pattern, sometimes more restrictive, but all except two including personnel, the greatest portion of school resources. Data from those districts also delineate functions which remain centralized, such as level of pay for personnel. Cleveland is in general accord with the other districts, but two main exceptions are noted. One is the state law requiring a certain teacher-to-pupil ratio district wide. The other, perhaps more important, is that personnel are not de facto part of the scope of school decision-making.

Interviewees perceive two main processes as part of the structure of school-based management. The first is the mechanism by which resources are allocated to schools. A general rule is applied: 'The money follows the child'. This means that schools receive the bulk of their allocations from a formula which multiplies their enrollments by the allotment per child. Many adjustments are made for programs of various kinds and for school attributes. While many interviewees perceived the system of allocations to be very fair, one criticism to such a mechanism is that when it is linear, small schools have little discretionary income. A second is that small districts may not be able to apply formulas, which depend on the similarity of schools, very well. A third is that allocations precede planning efforts in the schools.

The second main process is a much more visible one because many more persons participate in it. This is the budgeting process — perhaps why school-based management is sometimes called school-based budgeting. While this process is summarized more completely in the following section on accountability, two aspects of it are noted here. One is that it is cyclic for both district and schools. After the district

provides the schools with district goals and resources, schools plan and respond with their budgets, mostly absorbed by personnel costs. The other is that teachers are purchased from the district at a uniform rate. Further, teachers not in a particular school move to a pool for selection by other schools.

Reflections on Structure

The starting points for the discussion on structure were the set of views expressed by writers on organizations — particularly organizational structure and the attendant topic of decentralization. The perspective of organizational rationality was contemplated. Political and economic decentralization in education were then examined. Later, structure was encountered as part of the small literature on school-based management itself.

Organizational Structure

A search of the literature on organizations revealed that Henry Mintzberg's (1979) treatment of structures (and especially decentralization) was a most useful way to build the groundwork for understanding school district structure. He presented five general types. Two of these, his simple structure where a single individual makes most of the decisions, and his adhocracy, where structure is highly fluid, project-based and very politicized, do not appear to match interviewee responses at all. They remain interesting archetypes.

The machine bureaucracy is a kind of structure which may share some attributes of school districts if the interviewees' comments on centralized management are correct. Roles with 'real authority' are those of top managers and the analysts in the technostructure, akin to superintendents and some senior office staff. First-line managers, such as principals, are seen as quite curtailed in their functions. The abundance of rules constraining flexibility is also a characteristic of the machine bureaucracy and a feature of centralized management as reported by the interviewees. However, the sophistication of the general knowledge of technical staffs in, say, a camera company, is probably much more extensive than that held by central office staffs in school districts. Such limitations make the model not fully applicable to education.

A structural type which Mintzberg believes is relevant to schools is the professional bureaucracy, which is largely coordinated by the

standardization of skills of professionals. But educational professionals have a variety of skills and they work together to render service to masses of students. So schools may require more coordination among their personnel than doctors' offices. And interviewees did not consider schools to be administered democratically, either before school-based management, when a great many decisions were made at the central office, or after decentralization, when principals 'had the final word'. Mintzberg may have grouped schools too globally into a category which only somewhat fits their usual design.

Mintzberg's divisionalized form appears to be the closest model to the structure of school-based management as encountered in this study. While he notes that districts typically have elementary and secondary 'divisions', under decentralization the key unit of management becomes the school, which may be characterized as 'quasi-autonomous' when sizeable amounts of authority are delegated. Coordination is achieved, not by control of resource inputs (such as numbers of teachers per student) but by examination of outputs (such as survey results and other indicators). Mintzberg also notes that many kinds of decisions are retained by headquarters. That observation appears to be mirrored in the way some district-wide decisions are not decentralized, such as collective bargaining and general policy-making. There is one difficulty which Mintzberg has with the divisionalization of public service agencies such as schools. He warns that because of the problem of measurement of outputs, the choices are to ignore the controlling function, to control work processes, or to impose artificial performance standards. Contrarily, the evidence in this study suggests that control was taken seriously by senior district administrators and school boards that no special incursions on classroom processes were declared, and most particularly, that the output control processes in the form of surveys were accepted by the educators who were partially judged by them.

Two background assumptions made in connection with organizational decentralization were (i) the relative need for order (or tolerance for disorder); and (ii) the locus of knowledge resident in the hierarchy. Simon, Schumacher and Brooke contemplated the issue of tolerance for disorder. Schumacher expressed the need for 'creative freedom' and the danger that the tendency to order would remove the freedom. Brooke and Simon noted that when the need for order was stressed, safety was often a concern and a 'lack of confidence' in lower level personnel was expressed. The present study did not address the concepts of order and disorder extensively. They appear to have been raised during the period prior to adoption of school-based management in the districts studied.

However, they are found in the study in two ways. One is in the remarks of some respondents, who suggested that it was necessary to build 'trust' into relationships between central office and schools, and between principals and staffs. Thus, personnel are viewed as being trustworthy. The other was indirectly in the statements of the aims of decentralization made by the districts. It is possible to infer from them that a certain tolerance of disorder lies behind the desire to attain responsive school decision-making.

The other background assumption is the question of 'who knows best'? Mintzberg and Brooke tackle this one, noting that particular knowledge is invariably located at the 'units', but that 'scarce knowledge, expertise, or ability' may be at headquarters or in the units. The problem of the 'wider picture' is also raised. Documents and interviewees suggested that the districts in this inquiry have resolved that particular knowledge of educational needs is resident in the schools, and therefore, school personnel are given the authority to act on that knowledge. There is no question that schools are in command of the bulk of district resources, which appears to reflect the belief that school personnel are competent to make school-level decisions, an idea supported by a number of interviewee comments. But the districts have maintained their central office support staffs, which suggests that general knowledge of subject matter and other specialists is not decentralized, apart from the limited experiment involving user pay for consultants in Edmonton. Further, some interviewees questioned the ability of schools to know what services they 'actually need'. It appears that the 'knowledge issue' is mostly, but not completely resolved.

A full understanding of decentralization requires that its form be determined. Kochen and Deutsch (1980) make the point that decentralization is instrumental — to be judged according to the objectives it achieves and not for its inherent value. It seems fair to interpret the districts' goal statements for school-based management as being instrumental to aims such as responsiveness rather than decentralization for its own sake. Decentralization is defined by Mintzberg on the basis of the distribution of power, but it seems more apt to see it as *the extent to which authority to make decisions is distributed among the roles in an organization*. Authority, which is legitimated, becomes a critical concept and was one invoked throughout this inquiry. But what are the dimensions of decentralization?

Kochen and Deutsch present four dimensions pertinent to this study. They are functional specialization, feedback fitting and responsiveness, coordination and delegation and participation in decision-making. Overall, these four concepts seem rather global and

require much more particularity to be helpful in organizing thinking about school-based management, which is specific to schools and districts. While Brooke does not focus on dimensions explicitly, he raises a critical issue of how far decentralization progresses. However, it is Mintzberg who provides the most complete and clearly-articulated framework for decentralization.

Mintzberg offers two main dimensions of decentralization; each is a pair. The first pair is vertical/horizontal. 'Vertical' refers to the extent to which decisions are delegated downward in the hierarchy. If the documents and interview data are to be believed, districts with school-based management have achieved a considerable amount of vertical decentralization. Authority once resident in the board and central office has been passed to schools. And overall, that shift was welcomed by school personnel. 'Horizontal' refers to the extent to which decisions are delegated sideways. If the interviewees are correct that under the previous structure (often called 'centralized management'), the central office non-line staff had considerable authority to make decisions which affected schools directly, then that authority has been largely eliminated. A generalization which can be suggested is that previously, the districts studied were horizontally decentralized, now they are vertically decentralized.

But decentralization is just not that simple, as Mintzberg notes. He adds a second dimensional pair: selective/parallel. 'Selective' means that some authority is always retained at headquarters. Data from this study indicate that districts vary in the selection or scope of decision making accorded to schools. There is something of a continuum of delegated decisions, from supplies, equipment, personnel, maintenance, utilities, to consultant services. Beyond these, there are others which remain the purview of the central office, such as payroll, collective negotiations and general district policy. The other half of the dimension is 'parallel', which is the extent to which decisions are made in the same place. According to the interviewees' remarks, schools under school-based management have a bundle of decisions to make regarding their own affairs. Thus, it seems reasonable to say that the districts in this study demonstrated a varying degree of selective and parallel decentralization.

Organizational Rationality

Four sources which inquired into questions surrounding rationality in organizations were examined. This study may be able to provide some

insights into their perspectives and help determine the utility of some of the concepts which they harness.

Karl Weick (1976), in his article on 'loose coupling', offers a characterization of school districts as being quite disjointed. He says that job specifications, authority, reward systems and a definite absence of connections from higher to lower levels are to be found in education. In short, districts are not rationally conceived, except for a few parts which are tightly coupled. Does this inquiry shed any light on these concerns? Generally, it may be said that interviewees' recollections of what they called 'centralized management' reveal their agreement with Weick's description of districts and the way they functioned. The absence of clarity of role expectations, global ownership without specific responsibilities and lack of consistent evaluation were part of their experiences. Tight coupling in the form of inflexibility was also a prime concern. School-based management changed a number of these features in the districts observed. Flexibilities were introduced at the school level. Role descriptions, particularly for line officers, were much more clearly specified. The scalar chain of command was asserted. Review, control and evaluation systems were put in place. The outcome of the change to school-based management appears to be that the district administration is much more tightly coupled in many respects. However, at the school level, the flexibility provides much more looseness, except that outcomes are evaluated with resultant tightening. Looseness and tightness may coexist. The remark that it was now 'easier to get permission than forgiveness' illustrates this pattern well. It appears to be possible to alter the coupling in educational organizations. School-based management is one way of resolving the issue of just how tight or how loosely connected districts and schools can be.

A viewpoint closely related to loose coupling is March and Olsen's (1976) characterization that there are no clear connections between personal attitudes and beliefs and personal behaviour, between individual action and organizational action, between organizational outcomes and desired environmental responses, and between environmental actions and individual cognitions and preferences. They also believe that decision making is more of a 'garbage can' process than that of rational choice models. Does school-based management speak to these allegations when applied to schools and districts? It is inappropriate to comment on the rationality of decision-making processes under decentralization, since they were not investigated. But the larger question of the connection between individual beliefs and personal behaviour is addressed for principals, since some of them

231

indicated the ability to exert more leadership with school-based management. Many principals stated that their decisions had a definite impact on their schools, showing greater connection between certain individuals' action and organizational action. The other two potential connections may not be affected. However, regarding the fourth connection, environmental responses in the form of survey results do permit organizational changes in the form of alterations to decisions made in schools. In general, it may be said that decentralization has made districts and schools *somewhat* more rational in the terms of March and Olsen.

The third critique of organizational rationality came from the perspective of organizational cultures, articulated well by Bolman and Deal (1984). Although the structural view is explained, they emphasize their cultural perspective. It concentrates on the way in which organizations may be seen as entities full of symbolism, basing much of its weight on the perceptions of personnel and ways in which they find meaning in their activities. School-based management has some relevance to this view. A point of agreement is the idea expressed by some interviewees that school-based management was itself an 'organizational culture', something of a total way of thinking about how education is administered and delivered. But contrarily, the differences appear much more profound to this author. Both the aims and the general descriptions of school-based management suggest that the stress is on function and the instrumentality of the attendant processes — not their symbolic value, though such symbolic meanings naturally accompany decentralization. The authors' structural viewpoint seems a more useful one to understand decentralization.

A fourth perspective was offered by Gareth Morgan (1986), whose general analysis of organizational theories shows that they are conceivable as organizational metaphors. Both well-established and novel metaphors are presented and reviewed. Morgan outlines classical management theory, which he calls the machine metaphor, and the metaphor of the organization as organism, which is the part of the structural-functional view. In his specification of the machine metaphor, he delineates certain classical principles, such as the one boss rule, the scalar chain of command, span of control, staff and line distinction, division of work, delineation of authority and responsibility, and level of centralization of authority. Morgan appears to condemn the machine metaphor for its narrowness. However, the evidence provided in this study indicates that the problems perceived by interviewees prior to school-based management were violations of those classical principles, which produced some strongly negative

results. The change to decentralization was introduced partly in order to correct those violations, but within the overall goal of having the districts and schools adapt to new conditions and provide an improved level of educational service. Thus, two very useful frameworks for school-based management appear to be classical management theory and the structural-functional view. Morgan is probably wrong in his concern with the limitations of those large-scale conceptual models.

Political and Economic Decentralization in Education

While the instances of decentralization included in this inquiry were not examples of political or economic decentralization, the literature on those topics provides a relevant set of questions to pose in light of any effort to decentralize school districts. Political decentralization refers to a structure whereby authority is given to groups, such as parents or citizens in general, to control school districts or schools directly via a voting process. Four sets of authors (a comment and three proposals) were examined. How does school-based management stand in light of these writings?

Benson (1978) addresses the general issue of decentralization from state departments (or ministries) of education to school districts. Briefly, he argues that complete decentralization is inappropriate because (i) education benefits the wider society but not all districts would or could provide quality programs; (ii) revenue generation would fall more severely on poorer persons; (iii) there would be lack of curricular control; and (iv) it requires vision and expertise to forecast educational needs. School-based management, as encountered in this inquiry, does not appear to invoke these problems. That is because resource gathering, curricular control and general planning remain centralized functions. Although the experience with school-based management is not long-term, interviewees did not see these potential problems as emergent. Benson also stipulates reasons for not having education fully centralized at the state or provincial levels. Among them are knowledge of local conditions and teacher resources. Decentralization is a structure which appears to acknowledge local school conditions and teacher resources for schools.

One way in which decentralization could proceed is through a voucher mechanism, where parents would be given a ticket which they could redeem for a year's education for their child at the school of their choice. The key word here is 'choice', defended by Milton Friedman and others as an avenue to economic democracy. Freedom is the critical

concept behind choice. Coons and Sugarman (1978) also argue strongly for voucher mechanisms, but they assert that parents, rather than school personnel, have the greater stake in their children. Does the structure of school-based management resemble the voucher arrangement? In one way, it does. When dollars follow children, schools are allocated monies largely on the basis of enrollments. The effect is to have resources directed to the child's school, rather than initially to the parent and then to the school. Under conditions of open school boundaries, the financial outcome looks rather similar, except that only public schools are involved. However, school-based management differs from voucher plans in an important respect. While voucher proposals are usually perceived as blatantly ideological in their bases, most interviewees did not view school-based management as an ideological matter. They tended to judge decentralization on the basis of its effects, rather pragmatically. And they did not in general anticipate the negative outcomes associated with voucher plans as articulated by Levin (1980), such as the possibilities of increased racial and social class segregation or the dilution of the societal objectives for education.

Another proposal for decentralization of education is based on public choice theory, known for its incisive criticism of governmental bureaucracies and questions about their efficiency and the goals they pursue. Michaelson (1980) and others articulate a view of managerial self-interest, which sees administrators as highly rational, capable and inclined to modify organizational objectives to suit their own ends. Since they are not entirely trustworthy, it is suggested that control of education be placed back in public hands instead of remaining with professional educators. Does the observed structure of school-based management relate to this perspective? Chiefly, the objectives of decentralization appear to underpin the belief that personnel in schools are viewed as quite trustworthy, contrary to the self-interest idea. However, an important sentiment persists among some interviewees. Central office staff personnel, who do not have direct responsibility for students, are sometimes seen as serving their personal needs more readily. Their authority has been reduced under school-based management. The self-interests of principals may also be more clearly connected to the attainment of district goals because of clearer evaluation mechanisms. A key departure from public choice theory is the relative exclusion of parents from decision-making roles in schools. Parents are invited to participate (usually at the principal's discretion) and then only in an advisory capacity.

The third important statement for political/economic decentral-

ization is Garms, Guthrie and Pierce's (1978) proposal for school-site budgeting. Based upon the triangle of critical values (liberty, equality and efficiency), that proposal involves lump-sum allocations to each school, elected parent councils which would select and advise the principal, approve the school budget, and direct school-based collective negotiations. Performance would be monitored via testing and other indicators. The version of school-based management encountered in this inquiry shows two strong resemblances and some clear contrasts to that proposal. Similarities included the extensive devolution of decision-making to the school and lump-sum allocations. Differences are many and appear based on separate rationales behind each. The school-*site* budgeting proposal is largely grounded on the argument that ownership and control should be reunited. A consistent outcome is to give political control to parents via a school-based board with considerable authority. In contrast, school-*based* management as observed in this inquiry is organizational decentralization given to schools to the degree the central office and board are willing to share authority for decisions of various kinds (such as supplies, equipment, personnel, and so forth). Principal selection and replacement, school budget approval and collective negotiations remain the purview of the central office. Fundamentally, school-based educators are given control to make decisions based on their perceptions of student needs. And ownership rights are exercised through the district school boards via a well-specified chain of command.

The Structure of School-based Management as Reported

Three sources on school-based management were useful in understanding the kind of structure which districts have adopted. One was Lindelow (1981), who described some of the structures evident in Monroe and Alachua Counties in Florida. There, parent advisory committees were in place, but they did not control the schools. Principals had been given considerable authority and central office staffs had been reduced. Observation of decentralization in this inquiry reveals a closely-similar structure. Committees of parents were strictly advisory, and in only one district were they required. Others permitted them at the principals' discretion. The increase of the principals' authority was strongly evident where control over school personnel was accorded. The effect on the number of central office staff members was unclear because reductions also coincided with retrenchment.

Greenhalgh (1984) makes two general remarks about structure.

One is that he noted some decision-making authority was restricted to the central office. Examples were wage scales, matters of compliance with the law, labour agreements, allocations to schools and relationships to other governmental agencies. The evidence gathered in this study suggests a range of decision-making authority retained. It includes all Greenhalgh's examples but normally encompasses consultant services as well. The other aspects of school-based management which Greenhalgh offers in detail are the allocation and budgeting processes. Greenhalgh's general description matches the ones observed in this inquiry. One important point of agreement is the purchase of teachers at a uniform rate throughout the districts. Another is the integration of school budgets with district budgets.

A third source on school-based management is Marburger (1985), whose chief contribution is one of advocacy. The main point made is that decentralization can give authority to parents to direct school decisions and planning. Details of school council structure are quite clear, and give parents a large percentage of votes cast. Apart from the requirement to establish parent advisory councils in Cleveland, all other districts in this study permitted principals to decide if they wanted to include parents or other citizens in the planning and decision-making processes in their schools. This critical question — whether to have controlling or advisory parent councils — points to a clear difference between the school-based management championed by Marburger and that observed in the districts in this inquiry. His is a form of political decentralization, while these were a form of organizational decentralization.

Summary of Structure

Decentralization, as encountered in this inquiry, was clearly the organizational form; districts were not decentralized politically. Two key dimensions of decentralization were found: location of authority/responsibility, which was exactly specified in the organizational hierarchies, and the scope of decision-making accorded schools, which varied across districts. School-based management was characterized by two key processes. One was resource allocation, whereby resources are in the form of dollars are disbursed to schools. The other was the budgetary planning and review process, which included both central offices and schools.

All five organizational structures devised by Mintzberg were of some relevance to the study of school-based management. However,

his divisionalized form was found to fit the observed decentralization very well. Background assumptions to decentralization, the tolerance for disorder and the location of knowledge, were raised as issues. It seems useful to redefine Mintzberg's statement of decentralization to read: decentralization is the extent to which authority to make decisions is distributed among the roles in an organization. Mintzberg's dimensions of decentralization, vertical/horizontal and selective/parallel, were found to be applicable to school-based management.

The state of loose coupling was seen to be a characteristic of centralized school districts. Decentralization appears to have altered the coupling to make it looser in providing more flexibility for schools yet tighter with respect to the chain of command. This change may make schools somewhat more rational. The adoption of decentralization seems to be more than just a change in appearances, or image, as Bolman and Deal might suggest. Moreover, school-based management draws from concepts based in classical management theory and structural functionalism, which were found useful in understanding it.

While the decentralization studied in this inquiry was not the political form, the issues which develop when states and provinces give local boards decision-making authority were similar to those encountered. Voucher plans are perceived as ideologically-charged while school-based management was not seen by interviewees in this manner. Negative outcomes anticipated by writers on voucher schemes were not anticipated by interviewees. Public choice theory was somewhat relevant to this study, since the role of central office personnel was clarified. School-based management differed from school site management in two important respects: in this inquiry, principals were selected centrally and parental control of schools was exercised via the district boards.

School-based management as observed in this inquiry resembled its occurrences elsewhere in the United States. Many of the observations by Greenhalgh were upheld, though the ability of parents to control schools, advocated by Marburger, was not found.

Chapter 14

Discussions and Reflections on the Outcomes of Decentralization

Two sets of people have spoken on the topic of decentralization. One includes the writers who conveyed their ideas and findings about what decentralization is, what assumptions lie behind it, and what some of its effects are. The other set encompasses people who have experienced decentralization and who have articulated their views on what they felt were relevant aspects of school-based management in their lives as educators. Along with chapter 13, this chapter is devoted to the comparison of the ideas and facts expressed by each group. It is organized roughly in parallel to the literature review and the results chapters. The main four outcome themes are each examined in turn, first as a precis, then as reexaminations of the literature. At the end, the anticipations of those in centralized districts are compared with the reactions of those in school-based management districts.

Flexibility

Precis on Flexibility

Interviewees seemed to value greatly the flexibility of decision-making accorded to them by school-based management. They had a number of general reactions to the idea of flexibility. One was the lack of freedom most had experienced under centralized management. According to them, unique school needs, as perceived by the school, were often denied. Some believed schools were more responsive to those needs under decentralization. Others noted the extent of the flexibility accorded, saying that it had increased both in amount and frequency.

A great many responses to the request for particular examples of flexible decision-making were offered. First, many pertained to equipment and supplies, forms of tangible evidence. Second, many more examples relating to school staff were put forward. Trade-offs between personnel and materiel were evident. Examples of personnel-related decisions included more dollars for professional development, school choice and swaps of personnel, and increases in personnel allocations for learning tasks. The idea of leadership was seen as a part of flexibility of decision-making. And the limits to personnel decisions were noted. Third, decisions 'beyond staffing' were observed, such as those for utilities and consultant services. Fourth, the cases of five schools were delineated briefly to show examples of decisions made, many of which the principals believed would not have been permitted under centralized management.

As an extension of flexibility, the question of initiatives was put to many interviewees. Some believed that school-based management enhanced the possibilities for initiative-taking and could continue to do so as its scope increased. But many did not associate decentralization and innovation, noting that the structure did not reward for doing well or punish for performing badly. While the model for innovation is a grassroots one, there may be no incentive to innovate. However, this inquiry did not explore the question of initiative in depth — it was difficult to judge any response as to its degree of innovation. One problem which could have influenced the level of initiative-taking was the retrenchment (discussed in the summary on implementation) experienced by all schools in the study.

Still other general reactions to the idea of flexibility were received. One was the set of responses to a survey, which suggested that a fair degree of flexibility had been achieved in Edmonton and that it was perceived as the leading strength of school-based management by principals and teachers. Another characterization of decentralization came from the maxims: Formerly it was 'easier to get forgiveness than permission'. Now it was 'easier to get permission than forgiveness'. They speak to both flexibility and accountability.

Reflections on Flexibility

The major theme of flexibility occurred throughout the literature, but without a great deal of emphasis. However, the interviewees' stress on the idea was very strong. It emerged as a central theme in this inquiry.

Links between decentralization and flexibility were explored initially in the literature on organizations per se, in the general educational literature, and in the writings devoted to school-based management.

Responsiveness, the time required to deliver an acceptable response (Kochen and Deutsch, 1980), was seen as an important value. The word 'acceptable' is normally applicable to an organization's clients. The connection is made between decentralization and innovation as well. This thought is supported by Mintzberg (1979), who implies that decentralized organizations may be more attractive to creative people and Schumacher (1973), who argues the need for freedom to generate outcomes of creative ideas.

Does school-based management provide a greater degree of responsiveness? Interviewees rather resoundingly asserted that the level of flexibility of school decision-making had been considerably enhanced over their recollections of that permitted under centralized management. However, the responsiveness they were recalling usually was the ability to serve student needs as perceived by educators. Clients' needs as perceived by students and parents themselves appear to have been a secondary consideration. Was there a connection made between decentralization and creativity or innovation? Except for a few respondents, most persons did not perceive school-based management as providing an avenue for innovation or the exercise of creative behaviour. The resultant perceived flexibility of school decision-making may be seen as a strong outcome of this study, while the provision for innovative developments is not.

John Goodlad (1984) suggested more flexible decision-making at the school level. His recommendations were based upon observations of the more effective schools in his extensive study. He noted the desire for more control on the part of teachers and principals. The vision he portrayed is one where schools solved their local problems and became increasingly creative over time. His suggestion for an arrangement whereby schools could achieve these aims is that they be given a budget which includes all costs, even those of personnel. School-based management, as encountered in this inquiry, appears to be a direct answer to Goodlad's recommendation. Depending on the district's willingness to delegate authority, much of the flexibility desired by Goodlad was achieved.

Other writers address the problem of school improvement. Purkey and Smith (1983) object to the hierarchical model of organization where change is directed from the top. They favour a collaborative, bottom-up approach to improvement. The flexibility of school-based management appears to permit collaborative improve-

ment from the efforts of school staff. However, since the principal is clearly in charge, some potential for change rests with him or her, contrary to the authors' thrust for grassroots change from teachers alone. Clark, Lotto and Astuto (1984) suggest that change can be initiated at the district level, with teacher commitment to follow. The provision of district educational goals integrated with school goals in decentralization suggests their more top-down view of change is partially applicable.

The literature on school-based management itself made comparisons between flexibility permitted with centralized management and that accorded under decentralization. Greenhalgh (1984) and Lindelow (1981) each note the variable levels of flexibility accorded schools in decentralized districts. Such differences were also observed in the districts in this inquiry. Flexibility ranged from supplies and equipment, through personnel, maintenance, and utilities, up to consultant services. Marschak and Thomason (1976) presented the problem of external constraints — the limits to flexibility, mostly in the form of pupil-teacher ratios mandated by law. That constraint was observed in Cleveland but not in the Canadian districts. It may stand as an impediment to real flexibility and change. Contrarily, the evidence from this study would suggest that schools are in no rush to replace teachers with other resources.

Summary on Flexibility

Evidence gathered in this inquiry suggests that flexibility of decision-making for schools has increased with decentralization. Many examples of decisions made, including tradeoffs in budget categories, were offered. While perceived by personnel as a leading strength of school-based management, the provision of flexibility may not have presented much incentive for innovations in schools.

Responsiveness, an aspect of decentralization supported by Kochen and Deutsch and by Schumacher, was found to be based not on client needs, but on the perception of student needs by school personnel. The belief that decentralization produced creativity was not upheld. Yet, school-based management provided an answer to the number of wishes articulated by Goodlad, including the need for school planning and the provision of resources at the school level. Decentralization may support school improvement, initiated at the school or district level. The scope of flexibility and the constraints on that scope were issues raised by the literature and encountered in this study.

Accountability

Precis on Accountability

Another major theme on the minds of interviewees, accountability was perceived as a significant development. While not all the contents of the chapter on accountability or this summary speak directly to the concept, it is the one most closely associated with many of the changes which resulted from decentralization.

A key topic of accountability was the budgeting process found in each district. Interviewees in Edmonton said that schools receive their allocations based on their 30 September enrollments. After school planning is done, board sub-committees meet with principals to receive information and explanations about school budgets. Langley participants observed that the central office had veto power over school budgets. The difficult balance between the freedom of the school and the authority of the assistant superintendent to alter budgets was observed in Peace River North. In Cleveland, schools have budget autonomy within state law and collective agreements. For all districts, a clear process of budgetary review and control was in place.

School-based management appears to have brought many changes to the roles of personnel. They are summarized here in turn. The role of the board and its members retained many traditional functions. However, the boards no longer were concerned with the details of school administration. Complaints about schools were redirected to schools and then upward via the chain of command. Board members are more concerned with policy matters. Yet they appeared to feel quite in control via the budgeting and monitoring processes in place. For some, it was difficult to 'stand back' and permit schools to make some of the decisions they did.

Central office staff members were also affected. Line officers, such as associate superintendents responsible for clusters of schools, provide assistance to principals and direct links to superintendents. Staff members, such as consultants, are potentially affected in Edmonton, where a user pay experiment for some schools and consultants was in effect from 1986 to 1988. Some were concerned about the change in the kinds of services rendered and potential job loss.

The principal becomes a 'unit manager' under divisionalization. As such, he or she is the crux of school district structure. Many interviewees supported this idea. There were several general reactions to the role change for principals. A survey of Edmonton principals revealed that they see flexibility, efficiency aspects, and staff involvement

in decision-making as strongly positive attributes of school-based management, with accountability less so. Resource allocation is a problem for some but the time demands and stress factors accompanying decentralization are viewed as its major disadvantages. Principals may have accommodated their role redefinitions quite well. Seventy-nine per cent would recommend that other districts consider school-based management.

Another critical sub-theme of great interest to many respondents was the extent and manner of staff participation in planning and decision-making in schools. District policies made it clear that staff participation was expected. Some specified its nature; others left it strictly to the principals' discretion. Responses to the policies were varied. Some appeared to be rather democratic and showed a high degree of involvement. Other responses stated clearly that because the principal was held ultimately accountable, the principal would make final decisions regardless of the extent of prior involvement of staff. The specifics of some schools' participatory processes were reviewed and these appear to reflect a considerable amount of teamwork on the part of school personnel. However, not all teachers or support staff members seemed to want to be involved. And another interview study conducted in Edmonton confirmed that principals' decision-making was primarily consultative rather than collegial.

The effects of school-based management on teachers are quite evident but far less pronounced than those on principals. Interviewees conveyed two rather different views about participation in decision-making. One was that teachers do not care greatly about managerial matters; their focus is the classroom. However, the other was that participation had resulted in some schools.

Teachers' reactions to decentralization were captured in a survey in Edmonton. They suggested flexibility was the leading advantage, followed by staff involvement in decision-making and subsidiarity (the devolution of decisions to the school). Accountability was among the lesser advantages. Some thought that school-based management had no strengths or positive aspects at all. Leading the weaknesses of decentralization was the time demand, followed by problems with the allocation of resources, stress, and the increased authority of the principal. When the survey data were examined, it was found that overall, teachers agree with principals in their assessment of the consequences of decentralization.

Support staff members gave a somewhat conflicting account of how school-based management affects them. Some have accepted decentralization and involvement in decision-making quite positively.

They feel more a part of the school management team. Others appear to be apprehensive, citing job security as a worry. In Edmonton, the support staff was reduced, but that reduction may have been because of retrenchment.

Parents are the last group whose role is potentially affected under decentralization. However, their participation was at the discretion of the principal in the districts studied, except for Cleveland, where their role was still quite limited. Parent councils, when they existed, were clearly advisory and not controlling. When the topic of parental involvement was raised with principals, they tended to say that there were many ways in which parents participated in school affairs. Some also questioned parents' ability and motivation to make decisions for schools.

While most districts have standardized tests administered regularly to monitor student performance, Edmonton and Langley have rather extensive surveys of parents, students, and staff. The surveys are an attempt to measure the level of satisfaction (with structured response categories) which the three groups have on matters affecting them. Results are compiled by school with district averages indicated, becoming something of a school report card and of course, reflecting to some extent the decisions made by the principal. While seen by interviewees as generally useful in showing school strengths and weaknesses, the results do not specify why any particular indicator of satisfaction is high or low.

Reflections on Accountability

The subject of accountability was the second most topical one for interviewees in this study (after flexibility). The processes and features of accountability were also addressed in the literature. Considered somewhat briefly among the organizational writers, the concept is treated in some depth in education and also emerges in the school-based management literature.

The idea of accountability is raised by Drucker (1977). Brooke (1980) endorses it in general terms, stressing the need for measurement of results. A side issue which he raises is the possibility that decentralization could result in the sub-optimization of general objectives in favour of local ones. The provision of decentralization in two of the districts studied demonstrated an evaluation system which clearly measured results in the form of indices of satisfaction of clients (parents

and students) and employees. The form was a survey wherein responses were quantified. However, it is not possible to say if more general goals were sacrificed in favour of school-based ones; that possibility was seldom raised by interviewees.

A major concern of Mintzberg (1979) was, because divisionalized structures were regulated mostly by performance control systems, the difficulty of measurement of outputs in governmental service agencies such as education would preclude accountability or subvert it by the imposition of artificial indicators, resulting in the displacement of goals. Has this happened with school-based management? No. Responses from interviewees would suggest that the measurement of satisfaction had a reasonable level of validity and was used for evaluation with other data sources. However, some districts did not have accountability systems such as the surveys. In their cases, it appears that the achievement of accountability for outcomes was considerably less.

As a writer in education, Maurice Kogan (1986) provides a much richer exploration of the concept of accountability than do his counterparts on organizations. His definition of accountability includes a focus on the individual, the potential for review of performance, and the presence of negative sanctions. When role accountability was examined in this study, it appeared to fit that definition quite well. However, it was divided into two processes. One was the budgeting cycle where decisions were examined before they took place — a check on school planning. The other was post hoc where school results were considered and consequent actions taken.

Kogan offers three mechanisms of accountability, which he generalizes later into two overarching models. His first mechanism is accountability via state control, school boards, and administrators. The second is professional control through democratic participation, and the third is consumer control through parents. These last two are collapsed into one model, called the liberal democratic, which derives its legitimacy from the will of the electorate and the ballot box, and another, called the participatory democratic, which is based on ideas of pluralism and negotiations. Where does school-based management stand in light of these models? There is no question that decentralization as observed in this inquiry is clearly based on rule by the citizenry via election of school board members whose authority is extended through their administrators. Participation (in a controlling sense), is not included. However, non-controlling participation is evident through school planning involving teachers. It is also evident when

parents, students, and all segments of staff are asked for their levels of satisfaction. Thus the general model is a liberal democratic one in Kogan's terms.

References to accountability in the literature on school-based management are sparse. The budgeting processes are covered, and these appear similar to the ones observed in this inquiry. Apart from one observed instance in Lindelow (1981) and the endorsement of Greenhalgh (1984), opinion polls appear rare among districts with decentralization. A major departure from what may be the norm, Edmonton and Langley have surveys of parents, students, and staff built into the processes attendant to school-based management.

Summary on Accountability

The budget review process was seen as a key aspect of accountability by interviewees. They also noted numerous changes in the roles of personnel with regard to their authority and responsibilities. Those roles included that of school board member, central office person, principal, teacher and support staff person. Parents were affected very little, if at all. Another aspect of accountability was the use of surveys of satisfaction given to parents, students and all staff members. Results from those surveys were used to assess performance.

The existence of the survey evaluation system follows the endorsements of both Drucker and Brooke. Mintzberg's concern that such performance measures would subvert organizational goals was not upheld. More generaliy, Kogan's liberal democratic model, where schools are held accountable to elected officials via administrators, was the one observed under decentralization. Accountability in the form of survey assessments was located in only two of the five districts studied, a finding in agreement with the paucity of them mentioned in the school-based management literature.

Productivity

Precis on Productivity

The ultimate test of an administrative change, such as decentralization, is seen as whether it makes a difference to educational inputs, process and outputs. Are there any real changes in the costs of schools?

Results indicate that school-based management was not intended

as a vehicle to cut costs. It was illustrated that discretionary dollars have been reduced a great deal by retrenchment in one district. However, examples were offered to show that the dollars on hand might be used more effectively. It was possible to generate surpluses, thought to be a more efficient practice than spending money to meet financial deadlines. Principals valued highly the ability to have a surplus or deficit. Another facet of costs related to the ways in which supplies are acquired. Respondents recounted how hoarding of supplies, common under centralized management, was less necessary. Interviewees also believed that school staffs had gained a greater awareness of costs and had tried to reduce unnecessary ones.

There is also evidence for cost increases. The ways in which decentralization functions in a school district imply that different personnel are doing the work from those who did it under centralization. Workloads in schools seem to have increased as shown by the fact that the leading problem indicated by the survey of principals and teachers in Edmonton was the 'time factor'. Also, respondents in the survey associated stress with school-based management, a factor which may be viewed as an increasing cost. Interviewees believed that the use of computers had helped them to cope with the new workloads, although computer use was not universal and some problems with the technology were reported.

The concern about student access to resources was shown in the recollection by some respondents that under centralized management, some schools were much richer in resources than others. With the allocation rule that 'the dollar follows the child', equal access to resources was seen as more probable. Some respondents mentioned that they would not want to return to 'squeaky-wheel budgeting'. Others noted that some inequities among schools persist.

Are those resources which are provided to schools linked to tasks which could enhance learning outcomes? There is some evidence that this has happened, such as increased resources for professional development. Another potential shift is to have fewer personnel at the district level. When some centralized districts were matched with decentralized ones in the study of the use of personnel, it was found that decentralized ones had a slightly smaller proportion of central office staffs.

Some evidence on school allocation processes was in the form of resources matched to specific tasks. Several of these tasks were directly connected to student learning, such as books required. However, it is not possible to claim that such resources definitely increase productivity in the form of learning outcomes.

An issue raised by respondents in connection with the work generated by decentralization was the pull between the technical demands of the principalship as opposed to the need to show leadership. While most principals interviewed felt that their opportunities for leadership had increased under school-based management, some acknowledged that others among their rank may have become absorbed by the technical aspects of their role.

Is there any indication that outputs have increased under decentralization? The only data available to help answer this question comes from the Edmonton surveys of parental and student satisfaction. It was possible to compare the levels of satisfaction observed just prior to the full-scale adoption of school-based management with those four years later. Analysis done by Edmonton staff revealed that across the period, junior and senior secondary results for parents and students increased in most areas. Staff areas of satisfaction also increased during this time. When the results were analyzed independently, it was noted that elementary parents were more satisfied, both junior students and parents were much more satisfied, and secondary students much more satisfied.

Survey results from Edmonton show that satisfaction levels rose when compared to those in both Canada and the United States during the period before and after school-based management was instituted. However, it must be remembered that other factors besides decentralization could have influenced the levels of satisfaction of Edmontonians with their schools.

How do these general results speak to the sub-themes of productivity? The evidence suggests that decentralized schools may be more effective in accomplishing what they want to do since they are now able to deploy resources which they could not control under centralized management. Are schools actually more efficient? The results show both decreasing and increasing local costs, closer connections between costs and outcomes, and some increase in specific outputs. It does not seem reasonable to say that schools are more efficient based on this kind of unclear evidence.

Reflections on Productivity

One of the most important potential effects of decentralization has been labelled productivity. Such a concept derives from a systems model, which suggests that the input, processes, and outputs of an organization may be examined. Features of productivity were investigated as

organizational phenomena, as issues in education, and as aspects of school-based management per se.

The theorists on organizations devote very little emphasis to questions about productivity, perhaps because many of them have orientations to the private sector and simply assume that organizational changes are undertaken with outcomes, such as an increase in market share, in mind. Two who did look at the topic confined their concerns to costs. Simon (1957) argues that decentralized operations should be less costly to operate for a number of reasons relating to the quasi-independence of managers. Kochen and Deutsch (1980) disagree somewhat, saying that the cost of decentralization involves more managerial effort in planning local activities. How do the results of this study speak to those assertions? The evidence shows that workloads for school personnel appear to have increased as Kochen and Deutsch suggest. However, there were few facts to indicate that costs were reduced at the central office level because of decentralization. Further study is needed before the question of the costs of decentralization can be resolved.

Educators have attempted to understand the input-process-output model by applying the idea of a production function. Designed to relate resources to learning in a quantitative and formal manner, such studies have been quite severely criticized by Benson (1978) and others. Nothing in the accounts of school-based management has revealed any inclination to conceive of educational processes as production function ones. But the logic that inputs must bear some relation to outputs is not lost.

Authors on school effectiveness argue and provide evidence that certain general attributes of schools will produce more learning outcomes. Some of these attributes are managerial in nature. For instance, they assert that the principal's leadership, school planning, support to carry out decisions, and monitoring of school activities should result in greater school effectiveness. Does decentralization relate to these claims? Results from this study suggest that principals think their capacity for leadership is enhanced by the new authority they have been given. Principal and staff planning appears to be an important part of school activities. Principals say they have control over the resources supplied to their schools. And some (but not all) schools with school-based management have a monitoring system in place, either direct testing for learning outcomes or measures of parental and student satisfaction, or both. These results would suggest that schools with decentralization have certain features in common with effective schools as defined by the literature. An optimistic

interpretation is that administratively decentralized schools have a greater probability of being effective schools. However, a more cautious view is to note that the commonality of those features does not demonstrate effectiveness; only empirical evidence can do that.

School efficiency is defined as the relation of inputs to outputs and it may be increased in a number of ways (Thomas, 1980). The main work on efficiency in school systems reviewed in the literature was by Callahan (1962), whose extensively articulated thought was that educators, particularly administrators, may be distracted from their missions by a concern for efficiency. According to his study, this focus on efficiency took the form of cost reduction and the appearance of 'economy'. It is conceivable that Callahan's nightmare could be relived. Does school-based management bear any relation to Callahan's cult of efficiency? There is a small amount of evidence which suggests that a few principals may be distracted by the minutiae of bookkeeping and thus avoid more general problems in their schools. But, in general, the data indicate that principals and teachers are not burdened by the details of cost accounting for a few pence. Their work is monitored by surveys which are not highly specific and which they find acceptable and helpful in their jobs. No rigid prescriptions appear to be in place as to how to run schools to cut costs. Overall, it is possible to say quite firmly that there is no real evidence that Callahan's concerns have been resurrected.

The literature on equality of educational opportunity was barely touched upon in this volume. Yet the idea has been a mainstay for the study of educational finance for about two decades. Thomas (1980) and Schultz (1982) believe that in order for schools to be equitable, they must be efficient to a degree. Yet Garms, Guthrie and Pierce (1978) assert that equity and efficiency are highly complementary and largely mutually exclusive values. Does decentralization shed light on this argument? School-based management as observed in this inquiry has provided one answer to the equality-efficiency issue. Allocation is driven by formulas designed to give each school a fair share of resources. According to interviewees, the outcomes of lobbying for extra resources, a characteristic of centralized management, have been reduced. The simple conclusion is that resources appear to be distributed more equitably with decentralized districts. But pursuit of equality may stop at the school door. Once inside, resources are allotted according to priorities based on needs as viewed by school personnel. While inequalities undoubtedly result, interviewees suggested that such internal allocations approximate fair treatment, another form of equal educational opportunity.

Very little work has been done to assess whether school-based management itself may enhance school or district efficiency. Seward (1976) found that his decentralized district showed a more variable supplies budget. The Florida Commission (1978) suggested that efficiency could be increased with decentralization by matching resources to tasks with some increase in costs. It made the distinction between allocative efficiency which relates to the way outputs are distributed, and technical efficiency, which focuses on production. Another main point was the costs of decentralization seen as a potential burden for schools. This was raised by Seward and also by Marschak and Thomason (1976). Does the school-based management in this inquiry address these concerns? Evidence shows that a considerable variety of expenditures were made by schools for a plethora of objectives, some directly related to learning. Principals believed that many of these expenditures would not have been permitted under centralization. Technical efficiency may have increased. As for the costs, there seems to be no question that the workload on school personnel has increased, but mostly on principals. When asked if the load is found onerous, principals tend to grumble but prefer strongly to keep the authority to make decentralized decisions. When added to school offices, computers appear to help school administrators cope with that workload.

The literature was silent on the measured output of school-based management. However, the topic was seen to be so important that it was included in this inquiry. The Edmonton surveys reveal an increase in outcomes in the form of satisfactions registered by large numbers of parents, students, and personnel working in schools and the district office. These results appear to be stable, significant, and superior to those observed from general surveys conducted in the rest of Canada and the United States.

Summary on Productivity

While global cost saving was not one of the purposes of decentralization, some school cost reductions were observed. Increases in costs, largely in the form of personnel workloads, were also encountered. Shifts of resources in districts and schools were reported. Principals felt that they were made more leaders than technicians under school-based management. The only evidence concerning outputs was that from satisfaction surveys in Edmonton, which showed increases relative to other geographic areas.

Simon's assertion that decentralization would reduce costs was not supported. As for production functions, school-based management was not conceived in such terms by interviewees. Schools under decentralization have some administrative attributes in common with effective schools, such as planning. Decentralization is not associated with a preoccupation for efficiency, as conceived by Callahan. Though equality and efficiency are highly complementary, according to Garms, Guthrie and Pierce, greater student access to resources is evident under school-based management. Questions about efficiency raised in the literature are not fully addressed by the data gathered in this study.

Change

Precis on Change

The process of change to school-based management was highly important to a great many interviewees. Adoption of decentralization appears to have generated some controversy in most of the districts. But deliberate progress toward the point of adoption was recalled. The change was voluntary for the Canadian districts, but not for Cleveland, which incorporated school-based management as a result of a court order for desegregation which reflected the view that the schools could function more effectively if principals were given 'resources to perform needed tasks'.

The adoption process in most districts was overseen by a single person who most influenced the change. In Edmonton, this person was Michael Strembitsky, the Superintendent, who was credited with the vision and effort needed to effect the transition. Many interviewees characterized him as a person with clear convictions and the ability to work well with people. His reasons for instituting decentralization may be reflected in his personal value system, inferred from presentations he has made. Based on his value system, his organizational objectives emerge. They posit a positive organizational setting where cooperation is high and people function as a team.

Adoption in Langley was seen to be instigated by Emery Dosdall, the Superintendent. In Peace River North, the Chairman of the Board was the 'driving force'. Cleveland may not have had a single individual to champion school-based management. The weight of the court order combined with the willingness to execute it appears to have been sufficient for adoption to take place. In all districts, personnel in key secondary roles were harnessed to effect the implementation of de-

centralization. Such people appeared to be very important 'secondary movers' in the process of change.

It appears that districts engaged in extensive preparations at the start of implementation of school-based management. A great deal of work was involved in revising role descriptions, setting up the cycles, constructing the allocation mechanisms, and conducting in-service education. Information on school-based management was sought but reported to be difficult to find. The importance of having a working model, in this case, Edmonton, was underscored by those in the other districts. Early difficulties in accomplishing changes and providing information were encountered at both district and school levels.

Preparations led to pilot programs, a characteristic of all districts in this study. For Edmonton, the pilot project lasted four years and provided an extensive amount of learning. Schools were volunteers but the seven pilots were chosen to represent different kinds of schools. Many breakthroughs in administrative practices were made. Demand for information was high. Schools approached decision-making differently. Novel requests were made in the budgets. The Board found the school budgets illuminating. Later, a community of support for decentralization developed and the Board voted to implement the idea.

Langley underwent a similar pilot program with six schools for one year, then moved to involve the remaining schools. A great deal was learned in the pilot experience there as well. Fort Nelson initiated its pilot program in a similar way. In Peace River North, the pilot program was monitored by a district-wide committee. A handbook was developed and refined. The rural, geographically dispersed nature of the district appears to have been an inhibitor to the successful implementation. In contrast to the other districts, Peace River North did not implement school-based management district-wide. The preference was to have schools volunteer. Cleveland's pattern of implementation was quite similar to the other districts. One departure was that the pilot schools were approximately doubled in number each year, allowing schools to be matched. Also, a central office division was established to help the implementation.

During the period after the pilot programs, full-scale implementation took place in all but two of the districts. Some difficulties occurred and some persons left the districts. A teacher pool was created in Edmonton, where 400–500 teachers were moved each year.

Opposition to the change came from a number of groups during the adoption and implementation stages. The two ministries of education did not impede decentralization in any way. However, school board members were not all convinced that the idea was a good

one. Some central office employees resisted the devolution of decision-making to schools. While the majority of principals may favour school-based management, not all do. It was suggested that larger schools are more likely to endorse decentralization. Teachers' associations may be rather circumspect about school-based management, but some have supported it. In Cleveland, the state law requiring a 25:1 pupil-teacher ratio district wide may have reduced fears of job loss for teachers. Support staff unions have not expressed opposition, to the knowledge of this author. While some parents simply did not accept the idea of decentralization, generally, the level of opposition was not strong. However, it must be remembered that the five districts were selected and studied as examples of decentralization.

One major factor in the process of planned change for decentralization was largely unanticipated at the outset of this study. Retrenchment was often mentioned as a considerable impediment to successful implementation of school-based management. Felt quite strongly among the districts in British Columbia, the occurrence of retrenchment was confounded with the move to decentralize, creating confusion. Interviewees observed that difficult decisions relating to retrenchment, formerly made by the central office, were required to be made by schools. Yet some said that they preferred to be able to institute their own cuts in their schools' resources rather than having the central office make those decisions.

Reflections on Change

While not topics integral to decentralization, adoption, implementation, and continuation are important avenues through which decentralization may be understood more completely. School-based management, an example of planned change, came about in different ways in different settings. Some general remarks in response to the writings reviewed on organizations, educational change, and the transition to school-based management itself are in order.

A key writer on the topic of organizational change is Chandler (1962), who studied large corporations and their decentralization. His chief thesis was that 'structure follows strategy'. The new organization structure was developed to adapt to new expansions and to capitalize further on new markets. As a consequence, problems about lines of authority, responsibility and divisional autonomy were addressed. How is school district decentralization related to these changes? There is little question that much the same kind of decentralization occurred

with the same kinds of concepts used to describe it. However, adaptation to growth and new markets are not reasons found in this study for district adoption of school-based management, except possibly for Edmonton, where discontent with the status quo described in chapter 1 was offered as grounds for decentralization. The other districts were followers of Edmonton, apart from Cleveland on which decentralization was imposed.

Mintzberg (1979) and Dressler (1962) comment on a number of factors associated with decentralization. Market diversity is the major factor, about which Mintzberg (1979) warns that client or regional diversification may be incomplete (p. 395). Evidence in this study suggests that there is a considerable range in the amount of decentralization. Some districts do retain considerable decision-making authority at the central office. Secondary factors are also mentioned by these two authors. One of these is that decentralization is associated with size. In this study, while a large district played a leadership role, it was found that rather small districts can be willing to decentralize.

One of the more interesting features of decentralization pointed out by Brooke (1984) and Mintzberg (1979) is its cyclic nature. Organizations often move from centralization to decentralization and back at different times. Mintzberg (1979) thinks the divisionalized form may be inherently unstable because there are many 'forces' remaining to promote recentralization (p. 430). Such a tendency was not observed among the five districts included in this inquiry. While not all persons affected by school-based management were pleased with its outcomes, there was no major effort to return to centralized management. Perhaps the time period of the study was too short to observe such an effect.

The general model of planned change in education is characterized by three phases in the change process: adoption, when planning takes place; implementation, when the innovation is tried; continuation, when the new idea is imbedded or discarded (Huberman and Crandall, 1982). A number of factors are seen to influence the progress of change, such as aspects of the innovation itself, the institution, and its environments. One of these is the source of the innovation. Another is the extent to which it was adapted. A third is the role of key personnel and a fourth is how preparations were undertaken. What can be said about the change to school-based management in view of these factors? The answers appear to differ among districts. In one, the superintendent was acknowledged as a key source of ideas and 'push' for adoption. In another, the superintendent had working experience with decentralization and became its local champion. Others used 'leader' districts as examples. One was required to decentralize by a court

order. The adaptation question is not answered clearly in this inquiry. A general possibility is that for the Canadian districts, the Edmonton model was copied fairly faithfully but adapted to local rural circumstances. As for key personnel, superintendents emerge as central instigators of change in some districts, but not all. Other senior administrators and board members were also active. And once the adoption was certain, the role of lieutenants in the transition became very important. As for preparations, the close involvement of principals in particular was noted. But throughout the districts, a considerable effort at planning and preparation was evident.

In general, the tri-phasic model seems to be a useful one because it highlights what appear to be critical aspects of the change. One factor not specifically anticipated by the model, yet which appeared to affect the change process in one jurisdiction, was province-wide retrenchment. It was confounded with the change to decentralization and made the transition more difficult. For some, the processes were confused and the hard decisions resented. Others saw decentralization as a means of coping with adverse financial conditions.

Evidence about the change process on school-based management was scant in the literature. However, two aspects reported by Lindelow (1981) were the speed of the change and the presence of pilot programs. It was observed in this inquiry that the larger districts planned extensively and then began pilot programs of a few schools. The pilot stage lasted four years in those districts, at the end of which, implementation was full-scale. Smaller districts were able to institute pilot programs of one year's duration and then move to decentralization for all schools.

The Florida Commission's Report (1978) focussed clearly on the problem of change. It noted that there was considerable opposition across the state from professional groups and that some small districts questioned the appropriateness of school-based management. It is fair to say that opposition in the districts included in this study was not sufficient to halt the implementation of decentralization. While not all persons were satisfied with the change, it appears that in the districts studied, opposition was not extensive. No evidence was gathered to determine why; that is the subject of another study. As for the small districts, they appeared to adapt school-based management's allocation methods to suit their circumstances.

The Florida Commission stressed the need for support for decentralization prior to adoption. It determined that a sizeable amount of preparation in the form of knowledge about school-based management and skills required was necessary for successful implementation. It also

raised the question of the advisability of a state-wide mandate of decentralization. This study's results showed a strong level of support for decentralization prior to adoption, partly based on early preparations and considerable discussion. There was evidence of extensive preparation and testing of decentralization in the districts studied. It is important to stress that all four Canadian districts undertook school-based management voluntarily and at their own rate of transition — no provincial mandates were in place. The only compulsive element was found in Cleveland (the court order).

Summary on Change

School district change to school-based management can be voluntary or involuntary. Adoption was often seen as fostered by a single leader, particularly in Edmonton. Those in secondary roles were also important in the change process. Districts engaged in extensive preparations followed by pilot programs. Opposition to the change was found in a number of quarters, but it did not halt adoption or implementation. Concurrent retrenchment was seen as an impendiment to the change to decentralization.

Chandler's main idea, that 'structure follows strategy' is not clearly upheld with reference to decentralization in education. Some of the factors in the change to decentralization mentioned by Mintzberg and Dressler were observed. However, the cyclic nature of centralization/decentralization, stressed by Brooke, was not evident. The tri-phasic model of planned change, integrated by Huberman and Crandall, was used to organize the results. Retrenchment was apparently unanticipated by that model. Perhaps because the districts made a major effort to facilitate the change during the adoption and implementation phases, potential problems raised by the Florida Commission did not materialize extensively in the districts studied.

Anticipations Revisited

Although the prime evidence about school-based management comes from persons in decentralized districts, a number of interviewees in more traditionally managed or centralized districts were asked to anticipate what administrative life might be like under school-based management. Many of their beliefs were widely shared. Let us compare

their views, expressed in chapter 1, with reality as perceived by those who have experienced decentralization.

Elements of the general structure of school-based management were quite accurately understood by those in centralized districts. These included the idea of lump-sum budgeting, varying degrees of decision making under school control, and clear determination of authority. They also noted the potential of decentralization for larger districts, though they overlooked the possibilities for smaller. A main concern turned out to be parental control of schools. These interviewees strongly favoured the administrative model of control over the political model.

Flexibility was seen as a prime advantage. Those in centralized districts believed that principals would have considerable discretion to plan and make many kinds of decisions about resource allocation in their schools. As a consequence, they foresaw accurately the most compelling outcome of this study.

How did they believe accountability of roles would be affected? They thought that the board would become more concerned with policymaking, that central office staff persons would be advisory, and that principals would receive the main responsibility for school welfare. All of these views were borne out. However, many principals were fearful of the new responsibility, though their colleagues in decentralized districts expressed few reservations about their added duties. Further, they anticipated correctly the issues surrounding staff participation in decision-making.

Interviewees in centralized districts foresaw the ability to match resources with school priorities. However, they were in almost complete disagreement with their counterparts under school-based management on the leader/technician issue. They believed that decentralization required less school leadership, while those under decentralization were quite adamant that their roles required more. Further, they overestimated the need for technical knowledge. One issue which they forecast quite accurately was the workload required of school personnel for additional planning and decision-making.

How did they view the process of change to decentralization? Quite resoundingly, they expressed the need for ample preparation prior to the full-scale implementation of school-based management, a matter affirmed by those in the decentralized districts. They foresaw accurately that some groups would support the adoption while others would potentially oppose it. They generally favoured decentralization, though some had reservations. Such a level of support for school-based management was also found in the districts studied.

What is the overall fit between the anticipations expressed in centralized districts and the reality as experienced by those in districts with school-based management? It seems remarkably close. This congruence may be explained only partly by the visits to decentralized districts which a few of the interviewees had taken. Many of them had a rather limited concept of school-based management until it was explained by the interviewer. Yet, they were able to draw many of its implications quite accurately. The exceptions, myths found to be untrue, were twofold: (i) fear that principals might be unable to cope with their new authority to make decisions in their schools; and (ii) fear that the new principal's role would detract from his or her ability to be an instructional leader as opposed to a technician. Neither of these fears was confirmed; in fact, the outcomes were mostly contrary to these suppositions.

Chapter 15

Some General Thoughts on Decentralization

This chapter contains a number of important elements which are needed to bring this volume to a close. First the limitations of this study are noted. Second, conclusions are specified in simple, point form and a figure is used to characterize the study. Following that section, the conceptual synthesis is reexamined and a commentary is offered.

Limitations

This study was a modest one in terms of the resources available. It would have been helpful to have included a greater number of school districts with school-based management, both in Canada and the United States. As it stands, most of the evidence about decentralization was gathered in Edmonton, Alberta, and in Langley, British Columbia, with a smaller but significant amount coming from Cleveland and the two rural districts in British Columbia. This restriction permits the conclusions to be only tentative ones. Experience with school-based management elsewhere may not match completely with that encountered in these districts.

A second limitation is the relatively small number of interviews conducted for the present study. There were seventy in total, exclusive of the centralized districts which had forty-four. This concern is particularly applicable to a district the size of Edmonton, where interviewees numbered twenty. It is not claimed to tell the full Edmonton story here, but rather to give some indications of the patterns of experiences which seem to be in place. Cleveland, too, deserves more focus than it received here because of restricted resources. However, Langley and the rural districts probably have been exposed to a level of scrutiny which is more suited to their size and

complexity. The result of this limitation is that it may not always be safe to generalize to all persons connected with the districts studied.

Third, the interviews resulted from a sampling procedure which was purposive. Respondents were chosen because of their potential knowledge about, and insights into, decentralization. While they covered most of the spectrum of roles in Edmonton and Langley, it cannot be asserted that interviewees' responses are fully representative of the entirety of the districts' personnel. This limitation is even more severe for Cleveland and the rural districts. It was overcome partially, in the author's view, with the inclusion of results from surveys. But it should be kept in mind that generalizations to entire districts are most tentative.

A fourth methodological limitation is important, although it may seem a subtle one. It is just not possible to say for certain that the apparent outcomes, such as flexibility, accountability, or aspects of productivity were *caused* by the adoption and implementation of school-based management. Even when it seems evident that these outcomes increased when decentralization was put into effect, it is always possible to attribute their perceived changes to other factors. In this kind of research without controls on events, the apparent outcomes may always be questioned. It is most appropriate to do so.

Fifth, it is quite apparent that the greater part of the evidence presented in this inquiry comes from those who have actually participated in the decentralization process. While this may be considered a strength of the study, it is also a limitation because the views and facts presented by numbers of persons do not guarantee correctness (40 million French can be wrong). Very few other kinds of evidence were introduced into this study. While every effort was made to report and interpret the views of the interviewees faithfully, it is always possible to judge the weight of opinion to be correct and wrongfully ignore dissent and discontinuity when they arise.

Conclusions in Point Form

It is not easy to decide what outcomes of a study merit the heading of conclusions. The main criterion for their selection was their strength on the basis of the evidence gathered in this inquiry. If they were well-grounded from several sources, their inclusion was much more probable. A second criterion was their reflection in the literature reviewed. When the evidence in the study was substantial and clearly interpretable in light of prior author's discussions, its inclusion was

more likely. Conclusions are ordered according to the five main themes. Within each, points are broken down into various categories. Again it must be stressed that these generalizations are tentative ones, given the study's limitations.

Conclusions on Structure

District Structure

School-based management is an example of organizational, rather than political or economic decentralization. Control of schools is not given to parents.

The districts with decentralization profess the belief that school personnel are trustworthy and knowledgeable enough to make school-level decisions.

School-based management is chiefly instrumental in its orientation. It was not introduced for any inherent value it may have.

The structure of school-based management as observed in this inquiry resembles other occurrences reported in the United States.

Many general services are retained by central offices.

The scope of decisions given to schools under decentralization varies from a small to large amount of district resources.

General

The structure of school-based management matches quite well with Mintzberg's divisional form.

Districts with school-based management have moved from Mintzberg's horizontal to vertical decentralization.

Districts with school-based management show a degree of Mintzberg's selective and parallel decentralization.

Decentralization may make schools and districts somewhat more rational.

The frameworks of classical management theory and structural-functionalism are useful tools for understanding school-based management.

Conclusions on Flexibility

School Flexibility

Schools under decentralization are considered to be much more responsive than when they were under centralized management.

Responsiveness is interpreted as the ability to adapt resources and procedures to student needs as perceived by school personnel.

The range of flexibility of decision making accorded by different districts to their schools is large.

External constraints imposed on schools under decentralization limits their flexibility.

School Initiative

School-based management may be a viable avenue for school improvement because of the flexibility it accords schools.

School-based management does not appear to be a key stimulus for innovation.

Conclusions on Accountability

General

The accountability model employed under school-based management is one which sees ultimate authority coming from the electorate and directed through boards and administrators. It is not formally participatory.

Accountability in decentralization is provided mainly by two avenues: budgetary review/control prior to expenditures and surveys of parents, students and staff satisfaction after expenditures.

Roles Under Decentralization

Boards become more concerned with policy matters than school administration.

District line officers link schools with the superintendent.

Central office (non-line) staff members do not direct schools.

Principals see themselves as solely accountable for their schools.

Most school staffs are consulted during budgeting but they do not control the planning process or school decision-making.

Parents do not control schools through councils.

Reactions to School-based Management

Principals strongly favour decentralization; teachers support school-based management, but less positively; support staff reactions are mixed.

Principals and teachers generally agree on the strengths and weaknesses of decentralization. The leading strength is flexibility while the leading weakness is the time requirement.

Some teachers and support staff want to participate in the budgetary process; others do not.

Conclusions on Productivity

School Productivity

Decentralization was not introduced to cut costs.

Some school-level costs may be reduced because of increased cost awareness.

Workloads for school personnel have increased but the new office technology may help reduce those workloads.

Contrary to the beliefs of those not in decentralized districts, principals consider themselves to be more educational leaders than technicians.

Outputs, as measured by parental and student satisfaction, have increased under school-based management.

General

School-based management shows no connection to the thinking behind production function analysis.

Schools under school-based management may have some administrative similarities with effective schools.

School-based management districts do *not* demonstrate a preoccupation with efficiency conceived as cost accounting.

The evidence is unclear about the overall efficiency of decentralization.

Technical efficiencies in schools may have increased because resources are more matched to school tasks.

Decentralization provides a measure of equal access to educational resources for students.

Conclusions on Change

Adoption

Districts usually have one person who provides leadership for school-based management.

Most districts in this study adopted decentralization voluntarily.

Other districts' experiences with school-based management appear to be important as information about decentralization is gathered.

Opposition to school-based management is voiced by some groups and individuals.

After the adoption decision, the roles of secondary leaders become important.

Implementation

School-based management is accompanied by extensive preparations.

Pilot programs of one to four years are part of implementation.

Small districts adapt school-based management to their circumstances.

Retrenchment makes the change to decentralization much more difficult.

No tendency to recentralize emerges after school-based management is instituted fully.

The Decentralization Diamond

One way to describe decentralization and its outcomes is in symbolic form. The major themes of *structure, flexibility, accountability, productivity and change* may be arranged in a diamond pattern, using the first letter of each theme (see figure 3).

Structure is at the centre and linked to all other themes because it provides the unifying perspectives for this inquiry into school-based management. *Productivity* is on the bottom since it is seen as the ultimate test of the worthiness of decentralization and supports all other concepts. *Change* is on the top, forming the superstructure which requires all other elements to be in place. *Flexibility* and *accountability*, chief substantive components, are posed opposite each other because they are largely complementary.

Figure 3: The Decentralization Diamond

NOTES: S = Structure
F = Flexibility
A = Accountability
P = Productivity
C = Change

The Conceptual Synthesis Revisited

Does the empirical investigation of school-based management illuminate the conceptual synthesis which evolved from the literature review? It is rather presumptuous for a small study to try to add much to a framework based on compilation of many writings. However, here are some modest comments which may be of value.

The first level of the synthesis concerns the choice of the structural-functional viewpoint. It seems that this study was usefully guided by that general set of concepts. However, there is no question that the alternative could have been pursued. School-based management could have been studied as a cultural phenomenon; decentralization could have been seen as a mobilizer of emotion. Thus, the synthesis provided an important general alternative which may be fruitful.

The second level, addressing the forms of decentralization, lays out two global choices, political or organizational. While the organizational emphasis was pursued, the political alternative remains a clear possibility for the study of decentralization in general or school-based

management in particular. However, very little evidence of participatory decision-making was encountered in this study.

The third level of the synthesis suggests many questions about organizational structure which were pursued at some length in this monograph since they offered elements and principles attendant to decentralization. The three higher levels in the framework thus provided alternatives and some direction for the conduct of this research.

The fourth level, which addresses outcomes, is a large step closer to the empirical world of school-based management, and hence it is more appropriate to comment on how it might be altered in view of this study. A major outcome of school-based management was local flexibility. This concept seems to have not been given the amount of emphasis in the literature which respondents were willing to offer. Such a relative silence in academic writings may suggest an area of theoretical homework. The second outcome was accountability. Again, this question served to provide alternatives. Yet, its emphasis was also not great, given the centrality the concept played in this study. A third idea was productivity, a compendium of related concepts pertinent to decentralization. The ideas therein may have been more clearly addressed if they were each given more separate identities and focus. The topic of change was highly connected to school-based management in the minds of respondents. Process and product were run together. This result may imply that the process and substance of change may be more closely related than suggested by the general change literature. At the bottom of the conceptual synthesis lies school-based management, which deserves its own reflections, to be found in the next section.

Commentary

This discussion serves the special purpose of permitting the momentary suspension of strict rules of writing to allow the author to engage in some unfettered thinking. This is the author's opportunity to contemplate each theme a little more broadly or more fancifully. But the reader is warned that such play with ideas does not constitute serious work. Rather, it is to be considered part of March's (1972) 'technology of foolishness', where no responsibility is claimed for the clarity, certainty, or propriety of the thoughts presented.

The principles of decentralization have been applied to schools, resulting in the divisionalized form of organizational structure. But as

267 .98

Mintzberg observed, divisional managers tend to 'stop the buck'. To put the idea another way, decentralization dies at the principal's desk. If the concept of decentralization is worthy of pursuit, why stop at the role of chief school administrator? There are some elements of grade-based budgeting and department-based budgeting already evident in this study. But a more exciting unit for planning is the teacher or classroom.

What would teacher-based management look like? Most probably, what school-based management is on a small scale with certain alterations. A school allocation system would disburse funds to teachers directly. Teachers, or perhaps teacher teams, would decide how to spend their monies. When coordination was necessary, the principal would become involved, otherwise not. Budgets would be submitted for approval and integrated into the school plan. If such freedom was accompanied by the requisite accountability, the teacher would be elevated to a professional status, having control over monetary resources and not just time allocations in the classroom. Some exciting questions arise. How would teacher supervision be affected? Would teacher teams be stratified? How might they be composed? Would learning outcomes be altered positively if teachers were given this amount of discretion and then held accountable? Would learning be affected more than under divisionalization? The possibilities are far more complex than this discourse has alleged but the idea seems worthy of some good conceptual investigation. If school-based management was to be extended in this way, then it seems reasonable to expect some of the advantages and disadvantages of Mintzberg's professional bureaucracy to occur.

Another extension, the ultimate one perhaps, is to student-based management. Not appropriate for kindergarten maybe, but at the level of senior secondary students, something which could be contemplated. It is possible to imagine resources being disbursed to at least some students. And the freedom to learn by the method one chooses is an exciting idea, though accountability may or may not be a surmountable problem.

The districts investigated in this study demonstrated a fair range of decisions which were accorded to schools, from supplies and equipment to consultant services. Two seemed to be quite restricted. Apart from the usual need to maintain ultimate controls at the state or provincial level, how far can the continuum go? As Greenhalgh suggests, some central office services seem to make sense only at the district level (such as payroll). But what would a district look like if all possible decisions were made at the school level? It seems clear that

local curriculum design and special needs programming would be located at the school level. In fact, schools could have their resident experts, as divisions of corporations often do. What would be a reasonable proportion of resource balance between central office and schools? If schools were to take full responsibilities for their management, including development of educational initiatives, then perhaps about 95 per cent of district resources could be allocated to schools, with a central office core remaining. Such a skeletal structure would contain line officers and the minimum of support staff.

The freedom which schools were given was well complemented by the responsibilities to which they were held accountable, something of a parallel to advice given adolescents. School accountability seems to be favoured by school board members and associate superintendents in this inquiry. But flexibility was also strongly endorsed by teachers and principals. Particularly by principals, who may have felt like 'real managers' for the first time. The pride of being in charge of their school radiated from many. One started his interview by volunteering the fact that he 'ran a $4.5 million dollar operation'. But this study did not go very far in discerning the deeper effects of assuming much more authority. What are the real effects on those people, who entered the teaching profession some time ago, possibly with the idea of avoiding the business world's hard-nosed decision making? Are they able to handle all the expectations? Might they be overwhelmed? Alternatively, would they behave like entrepreneurs, competing with other principals for students to build their own empires? While such problems did not emerge from the conversations with those interviewed, the author's intuition suggests that such possibilities exist and are worth investigating.

This study offered some grounds for the idea that school productivity was most likely increased under school-based management. However, much of the evidence presented was focussed on the inputs and processes of learning, not the outcomes of learning or other indicators of productivity. How schools produce learning remains an intriguing black box. Their efficiencies under school-based management have only been touched upon. Are instructional processes actually altered? Do principals supervise their teachers differently? Further, schools' level of equity as they carry out their functions has only been considered briefly. Is it possible that equality of educational opportunity for students in the form of equal treatment is attained in some way? How? These are key questions for those interested in educational finance and the economics of education. Does school-based management actually 'make a difference' on these dimensions? Clearly, many

more research resources are needed to investigate these topics. There are many doctoral dissertations and masters theses waiting to be written on this general theme.

The final theme considered in this inquiry was the change to school-based management. It was not covered extensively, though there is much to be told in the story of how decentralization 'came to be'. Much more needs to be done to understand fully why and how school-based management is adopted, implemented, and continued or discarded. Only the developed variants of the model were investigated in this study. But what are the seeds of *re*centralization? Can decentralization be institutionalized successfully via a state or provincial mandate? What is the role of compulsion in this kind of planned change? What about the instances where school-based management was investigated and declined, or attempted and rejected? Such narratives need to be told so that the full scale of understanding of school-based management can be appreciated.

Capstone

Here is the *bottom line*: This inquiry has shown that the organizational structure known as decentralization is perceived to have provided schools with some flexibility of decision making, districts with some means of accountability and has offered the possibility that such schools may be more productive. Decentralization has been examined as a structural phenomenon and the process of change from centralized to decentralized management has been investigated. There is only one recommendation which seems fitting to attend such a modest study. It is suggested that the educators and others who believe that districts and schools can somehow be made better are encouraged to explore further the ideas surrounding decentralization.

Bibliography

ALEXANDRUK, F. (1985) 'School budgeting in the Edmonton public school district', unpublished Masters thesis, Edmonton, Alberta, Department of Educational Administration, University of Alberta.

ANDERSON, R. C. (1984) 'Decentralized decision-making: The school-based management initiative of British Columbia school district no 35 (Langley)', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

BENSON, C. S. (1978) *The Economics of Public Education* (3rd edn), Boston, MA, Houghton Mifflin.

BERRY, K. D. (1986) 'School-based management: Perceptions and potentials in school district #nn', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

BIZZARRO, D. (Ed) (1987) *Market Guide*, New York, Editor & Publisher Co.

BOLMAN, L. G. and DEAL, T. E. (1984) *Modern Approaches to Understanding and Managing Organizations*, San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass.

BOYD, W. L. (1982) 'The political economy of public schools', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, XVIII, 3, summer, pp. 111–30.

BOYD, W. L. and CROWSON, R. L. (1981) 'The changing conception and practice of public school administration', *Review of Research in Education*, 9, pp. 311–73.

BROOKE, J. Z. (1984) *Centralization and Autonomy: A Study in Organizational Behaviour*, New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

BROWN, D. J. (1987) *A Preliminary Inquiry into School-based Management*, report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, grant no 410–83–1086.

CALDWELL, B. (1977) 'Decentralized school budgeting in Alberta', unpublished doctoral dissertation, Edmonton, Alberta, Department of Educational Administration, University of Alberta.

CALDWELL, B. (1987) 'Educational reform through school-site management: An international perspective on the decentralization of budgeting', paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Finance Association, Arlington, VA.

CALDWELL, B. and SPINKS, J. M. (1988) *The Self-Managing School*, Lewes, Falmer Press.

CALLAHAN, R. E. (1962) *Education and the Cult of Efficiency*, Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press.

CANADIAN EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION (1984) *Speaking Out: The 1984 CEA Poll of Canadian Opinion on Education*, Ottawa, Ontario.

CANADIAN ENCYCLOPAEDIA (1985) Edmonton, Alberta, Hurtig Publishers.

CARLISLE, H. M. (1974) 'A contingency approach to decentralization', *SAM Advanced Management Journal*, 39, 3, pp. 9–18.

CHANDLER, A. D. JR (1962) *Strategies and Structure: Chapters in the History of the American Industrial Enterprise*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press.

CILLIE, F. (1940) *Centralization or Decentralization*, New York, Teachers College Press.

CLARK, D. L., LOTTO, L. S. and ASTUTO, T. A. (1984) 'Effective schools and school improvement: A comparative analysis of two lines of inquiry', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 20, 3, pp. 41–68.

CLEVELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1982–86) *Decentralization Plan* (memoranda), Cleveland, OH.

CLEVELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1986a) *School-based Management Manual*, Cleveland, OH.

CLEVELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1986b) *School Community Council Training Packet*, Cleveland, OH.

COHEN, M. (1983) 'Instructional, management and social conditions in effective schools' in ODDEN, A. and WEBB, L. D. (Eds) *School Finance and School Improvement*, Cambridge, MA, Ballinger, pp. 17–50.

COLEMAN, P. (1987) 'Implementing school-based decision-making', *The Canadian Administrator*, 26, 7, pp. 1–11.

COLLINS, K. S. (1985) 'School-based management and the vice-principalship in school district no. nn', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

COONS, J. E. and SUGARMAN, S. D. (1978) *Education by Choice: The Case for Family Control*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press.

CORCORAN, P. J. (1985) 'School-based management in small rural school districts: The change process', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

CRAIG, D. K. (1985) 'Is British Columbia school district #nn ready for school-based management?', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

DENTLER, R. A. (1985) *Decentralization in the Cleveland Public Schools: An Evaluation*, Columbus, OH.

DRESSLER, G. (1976) *Organisation and Management: A Contingency Approach*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.

DRUCKER, P. F. (1975) *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, New York, Harper & Row.

DRUCKER, P. F. (1977) *People and Performance*, New York, Teachers College Press.

DYKE, C. (1981) *Philosophy of Economics*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.

EDMONTON EXPERIENCE II (1986) *Conference on Decentralization Sponsored by the Edmonton Public Schools*, Edmonton, Alberta, November.

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1983) *District Summary: 1983/84 Proposed Budget*, Edmonton, Alberta.

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1985) *District Summary: 1985/86 Proposed Budget*, Edmonton, Alberta.

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1986/87) *Budget Highlights*, Edmonton, Alberta.

FANTINI, M. D. and GITTEL, M. (1973) *Decentralization: Achieving Reform*, New York, Praeger.

FESLER, J. W. (1965) 'Approaches to the understanding of decentralization', *Journal of Politics*, 27, pp. 536–66.

FESLER, J. W. (1968) 'Centralization and decentralization' in SILLS, D. L. (Ed) *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, New York, Macmillan and Free Press, pp. 370–9.

FIELDING, N. G. and FIELDING, J. L. (1986) *Linking Data*, Berkeley, CA, Sage.

FRIEDMAN, M. (1962) *Capitalism and Freedom*, Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press.

FRIEDMAN, M. and FRIEDMAN, R. (1980) *Free to Choose*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich.

FULLAN, M. (1982) *The Meaning of Educational Change*, Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

GALLUP, G. H. (1979) 'The 11th annual gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools', *Phi Delta Kappan*, September.

GALLUP, G. H. (1983) 'The 15th annual gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools', *Phi Delta Kappan*, September.

GARMS, W. I., GUTHRIE, J. W. and PIERCE, L. C. (1978) *School Finance: The Economics and Politics of Education*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.

GOODLAD, J. I. (1984) *A Place Called School*, New York, McGraw-Hill.

GORDEN, R. L. (1987) *Interviewing: Strategy, Techniques and Tactics* (4th edn), Chicago, Dorsey Press.

GREENHALGH, J. (1984) *School Site Budgeting: Decentralized School Management*, Lanham, MD, University Press of America.

GUBA, E. G. and LINCOLN, Y. S. (1981) *Effective Evaluation*, San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass.

GUTHRIE, J. W. (1986) 'School-based management: The next needed educational reform', *Phi Delta Kappan*, December, pp. 305–9.

HAIDER, D. (1971) 'The political economy of decentralization', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 15, September, pp. 108–29.

HANUSHEK, E. A. (1981) 'Throwing money at schools', *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 1, 1, pp. 19–41.

HATLEVIK, E. A. (1986) 'School-based management: The role of the principal', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

HENTSCHKE, G. C. *et al* (1986) *School Business Administration: A Comparative Perspective*, Berkeley, CA, McCutchan.

HERRIOTT, R. E. and FIRESTONE, W. (1983) 'Multisite qualitative policy research: Optimizing description and generalizability', *Educational Researcher*, 12, 2, pp. 14–19.

HUBERMAN, R. M. and CRANDALL, D. P. (1982) 'Implications for action: A Study of dissemination efforts supporting school improvement', *People, Policies and Practices: Examining the Chaing of School Improvement*, 9.

KELLETT, R. P. (1987) 'A comparative study of budgeting in four school-based managed and four conventionally managed British Columbia school districts', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

KOCHEN, M. and DEUTSCH, K. W. (1980) *Decentralization: Sketches Toward a Rational Theory*, Cambridge, MA, Oelgeschlager, Gunn & Hain.

KOGAN, M. (1986) *Educational Accountability: An Analytic Overview*, London, Hutchinson & Co.

KOWALSKI, T. J. (1980) 'Attitudes of school principals toward decentralized budgeting', *Journal of Education Finance*, 6, pp. 68–76.

LANGLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT (1984) *Decentralized Decision-making: Information Guide*, Langley, British Columbia.

LANOUE, G. R. and SMITH, B. L. R. (1971) 'The political evolution of school decentralization', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 15, 1, September/October, pp. 73–93.

LANOUE, G. R. and SMITH, B. L. R. (1973) *The Politics of School Decentralization*, Lexington, MA, D. C. Heath & Co.

LAUGO, J. and MCLEAN, M. (Eds) (1985) *The Control of Education: International Perspectives on the Centralization-Decentralization Debate*, London, University of London Institute of Education.

LEITHWOOD, K. A. and MONTGOMERY, D. J. (1982) 'The role of the elementary school principal in program improvement', *Review of Educational Research*, 52, 3, pp. 309–39.

LEVIN, H. (1980) 'Educational vouchers and social policy' in GUTHRIE, J. W. (Ed) *School Finance Policies and Practices*, Cambridge, MA, Ballinger, pp. 235–63.

LEVIN, H. (1974) 'Measuring efficiency in educational production', *Public Finance Quarterly*, 2, 1, pp. 3–24.

LINDELOW, J. (1981) *School-based Management*, Educational Resources Information Clearinghouse, ED 208 452.

MCLAUGHLIN, M. and BERMAN, P. (1978) *Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change Volume 8: Implementing and Sustaining Innovation*, Santa Monica, CA, Rand Corporation.

MARBURGER, C. L. (1985) *One School at a Time*, Columbia, MD, National Committee for Citizens in Education.

MARCH, J. G. (1972) 'Model bias in social action', *Review of Educational Research*, 42, 4, pp. 413–29.

MARCH, J. G. and OLSEN, J. P. (1976) *Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations*, Bergen, Universitetsforlaget.

MARSCHAK, T. and THOMASON, D. (1976) *Coordination Versus Local Expertise: A New View of School District Decentralization*, Educational Research Information Clearinghouse, ED 130 417.

MICHAELSON, J. B. (1980) 'Efficiency, equity and the need for a new educational policy' in GUTHRIE, J. W. (Ed) *School Finance Policies and Practices*, Cambridge, MA, Ballinger, pp 207–34.

MILES, M. B. and HUBERMAN, A. M. (1984) *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage.

MILLER, D. and FRIESEN, P. H. (1984) *Organizations: A Quantum View*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.

MINTZBERG, H. (1979) *The Structuring of Organizations: A Synthesis of the Research*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.

MINTZBERG, H. (1983) *Structure in Fives: Designing Effective Organisations*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.

MORGAN, G. (1986) *Images of Organization*, Beverly Hills, CA, Sage Publications.

NISKANEN, W. (1971) *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*, Chicago, IL, Aldine Atherton.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (1983) *Minimum Standards: Elementary and Secondary Schools*, Columbus, OH, Ohio Department of Education.

OZEMBLOSKI, L. (1987) 'A study in planned educational change: The cases of school-based management in the Edmonton, Alberta and Langley, British Columbia public school districts', dissertation proposal in educational administration, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

PALMER, R. and MOSYCHUK, H. (1983) *Student-parent-staff attitude Survey: 1983*, Edmonton, Alberta, Edmonton Public Schools.

PALMER, R. and MOSYCHUK, H. (1984) *General Educational Attitude Survey: 1984*, Edmonton, Alberta, Edmonton Public Schools.

PALMER, R. and MOSYCHUK, H. (1985) *Student-parent-staff Attitude Survey: 1985*, Edmonton, Alberta, Edmonton Public Schools.

PARRY, A. (1985) 'School-based budgeting: The case for', paper presented at the invitational conference on Education Finance, Banff, Alberta.

PARSONS and BRIGGS MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE INC (1983) *An External Assessment of the School-based Management Project*, Columbus, OH, Parsons and Briggs Management Assistance Inc.

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (1986) *Comparative and Analytical Data: 1986/87 School District Budgets*, Victoria, British Columbia, Province of British Columbia.

PURKEY, S. C. and SMITH, M. S. (1983) 'Effective schools: A review', *The Elementary School Journal*, 83, 4, pp. 427–52.

SCHULTZ, T. W. (1982) 'Human capital approaches in organizing and paying for education' in MCMAHAN, W. W. and GESKE, T. G. (Eds) *Financing Education: Overcoming Inefficiency and Inequity*, Urbana, IL, University of Illinois Press, pp. 36–51.

277

SCHUMACHER, E. F. (1973) *Small in Beautiful*, London, Blond & Briggs.

SEWARD, N. J. (1975) 'Centralized and decentralized school budgeting', unpublished doctoral dissertation, Berkeley, CA, University of California.

SIMON, H. A. (1957) *Administrative Behaviour* (2nd edn), New York, Free Press.

SNYDER, K. J. and ANDERSON, R. H. (1986) *Managing Productive Schools: Toward an Ecology*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich.

SOMERVILLE, N. (1981) *Emerging Issues in Education Finance*, Ottawa, Ontario, Canadian Teachers' Federation.

SOMERVILLE, N. (1985) 'School-based management: The case against', paper presented at the invitational conference on Education Finance, Banff, Alberta.

SPENCER, B. D. and WILEY, D. E. (1981) 'The sense and nonsense of school effectiveness', *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 1, 1, pp. 43–53.

STATE OF FLORIDA (1978) *Improving Education in Florida: A Reassessment*, Tallahassee, FL, Select Joint Committee on Public Schools.

STEVENS, M. (1987) 'The piloting of school-based management in Fort St John: A case study of a small northern school district', unpublished Masters paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

STREMBITSKY, M. (1985) interview data.

STREMBITSKY, M. (1986) presentation at the Edmonton Experience II conference, Edmonton, Alberta.

SWEENY, J. (1982) 'Research synthesis on effective school leadership', *Educational Leadership*, 39, 5, pp. 346–54.

TAMBLYN, R. (1988) 'Centralized financial decision-making in a large suburban district', unpublished paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

TAYLOR, D. (1987) 'The discussion of school-based management as an alternative in organizational decision-making', unpublished Masters

paper, Vancouver, British Columbia, Department of Administrative, Adult and Higher Education, University of British Columbia.

THOMAS, J. A. (1980) 'Issues in educational efficiency' in GUTHRIE, J. W. *School Finance Policies and Practices*, Beverly Hills, CA, Ballinger, pp. 145–68.

Webster's New World Dictionary (1968) Cleveland, OH, World Publishing Co.

WEICK, K. (1976) 'Educational organizations as loosely coupled systems', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21, pp. 1–9.

World Book Encyclopaedia (1988) Chicago, IL, World Book Inc.

YIN, R. K. (1984) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, London, Sage Publications.

YOUNG, J. H. (1984) 'School budgeting: The roles played by principals and teachers', paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, April.

Index

accountability 6–7, 42–3, 51, 60, 101–1, 131–2, 167, 173, 239, 254, 261, 263–6
  and school-based management 93–5, 104–5, 159–179
  anticipated 12–15
  definition 77
  in education 76–79
  see precis on
  see reflections on
accounting 192
actions of individual schools 151–4
adaptation 51, 56, 87, 104, 252
adhocracy 26, 223
administrative decentralization 74, 129, 254
  see organizational decentralization
adoption 248, 261, 266
  background 200–201
  definition 87
  district-wide 208
advocacy viii, 90–1
Alberta vii, 115–6
Alexandruk, F. 120, 123, 140, 157, 166–8, 173–4, 184–5, 187, 213
allocation mechanism 139–42, 249, 252
allocation of resources 167, 173
  see lump-sum allocation
  see resource allocation
allocative efficiency 67–9
  see school efficiency
  see technical efficiency
American Federation of Teachers 214
analysis of data 124
analysts 27
Anderson, R. C. 267
Anderson, R. H. see Snyder
anticipations 9–21
  attitudes toward decentralization 20
  anticipations revisited 253–5
assumptions of decentralization 31–35
Astuto, T. A. see Clark
authority
  definition 77
  legitimated 225
  locus of 103
  principal's 71
  relationships 223–4
  see decision-making
authority and power, meanings of
authority and responsibility 6–9, 132, 133–4, 164, 222, 226
  anticipated 9–10
autocratic decision-making 172
autonomy 29, 30, 48, 61–2, 82, 103
  divisional 46

Benson, C. S. 61–3, 80–1, 229, 245
Berman, P. see McLaughlin 86–8

Berry, K. D. 4, 5, 11, 20
board see school board
Bolman, L. G. 50, 53–6, 228, 233
Boyd, W. L. 68, 71
Briggs see Parsons
British Columbia 116–7
Brooke, J. Z. 32–8, 40–3, 45, 48, 77, 224–5, 242, 251
budget tradeoffs 147–8
budgetary review and control 105, 160–1, 208, 238, 259
budgeting 3–4, 7, 104–5, 170, 205, 222
  and accounting 191
  cycle 90, 142, 249
  process 142–3, 159–62, 222, 232
  see surplus
  see planning

Caldwell, B. 91–2, 94–5, 100–2, 206
Callahan, R. E. 77, 84–5, 246, 248
Canada vii, 247, 256
Canadian Educational Association 197–8
causation 256
central office 46, 49, 60, 63, 103, 134, 184, 191, 206, 208, 245, 265
  size of 188–9
central office consultants 136, 150, 165, 192, 230, 232, 235, 238
central office staff 4, 13, 34, 38, 57, 87–9, 105, 200, 225, 243, 259
  role change 164–5
centralization viii, 33, 37, 41, 44, 47, 57–8, 60–3, 90, 100–1, 135, 151–4, 158, 247
  definition 36
  see centralized management
centralized districts 9–21, 119–120, 122, 253–5
centralized management 144–5, 147, 149, 159, 190, 215, 223, 226–7, 234–5, 237, 244, 246, 251, 259
chain of command 56–8, 163, 231
Chandler, A. D. 32, 45–6, 250, 253
change 101–2, 261, 263, 266
  anticipated 17–21
  in educational organizations 86–88
  to decentralization 45–9
  to school-based management 97–99, 200–17
  see precis on
  see preparation for
  see reflections on
Cille, F. 62
Clark, D. L. 76, 81–2, 87, 235
classical management theory 228–9, 258
  see machine metaphor
Cleveland 115–6, 118–119, 121–2, 137–9, 141–2, 152–4, 161–2
  pilot program 210–1
Cleveland Teacher's Union 214
Cohen, M. 82–3
Coleman, P. 173, 210
collaborative school management 94–5
collective negotiations 70–1
collectivism 65–6
collegial decision-making 16, 172–3, 210, 239
Collins, K. S. 4, 5, 6, 10–13, 15–20
commentary 263–6
commitment to change 20, 76, 87, 207, 237, 263–6
complexity 32
computers see technology
conceptual synthesis 100–102, 261
conclusions 257–61
  on accountability 259
  on change 261
  on flexibility 259
  on productivity 260
  on structure 258
consultative decision-making 172–3, 239, 259
consumerist control 77
continuation 106, 266
  defined 87
Coons, J. E. 64–6, 78, 230
coordination 26–9, 38, 40, 44–5, 57, 96, 224
Corcoran, P. J. 141, 186, 203–4
cost accounting 85, 246, 260
cost consciousness 182, 243, 260
cost increases 183–186, 243
cost reductions 85, 180–182, 243, 260

costs 17, 44–5, 69, 85, 96, 105, 245, 247
Craig, D. K. 5–7, 10, 12–4, 18–20
Crandall see Hubermann
creativity 41–42, 93, 236
crisis 33
Crowson see Boyd
cultural approach 54–5
culture 82

Deal see Bolman
decentralization
  cycles 48–9, 251
    see recentralization
  definitions 35–6
  dimensions 103, 132–9, 225–6
    Kochen and Deutsch's 36–37
    Brooke's 37–38
    Mintzberg's 37–40
  see administrative decentralization
  see organizational decentralization
  see political decentralization
  see horizontal decentralization
  see vertical decentralization
  see selective decentralization
  see parallel decentralization
decentralization diamond 261
decision-making, locus 26, 38, 44, 61, 75, 104, 130–1, 135, 176, 207, 231, 249, 254
  see authority
  see authority and responsibility
decisions beyond staffing 150–154
delegation 40, 51, 60, 236
department-based budgeting 264
Deutsch see Kochen
diamond, see decentralization diamond
discretion 29–30
disorder, condition of 32–33, 42, 103, 224–5
district intentions 131–132
district size 10, 63, 251
  see large districts
  see small districts
district-wide adoption 249
  see adoption
  see voluntary adoption
diversity 32
division of labour 38, 51, 57–8
divisional form 29–31, 43, 45–6, 52–3, 103, 130–1, 224, 258, 263
  and decentralization 30
  contingency factors 46–8
  instability 48–9
divisionalization, see divisional form
divisions, elementary and secondary 29
dollar follows the child 131, 243
  see money follows the child
Dosdall, E. 134, 154–5, 193, 201, 203–6, 214, 248
Dressler, G. 46–7, 251, 253
Drucker, P. F. 42–3, 240, 242
Du Pont 45
Dyke, C. 65–6

economics of education 265
Edmonton 21, 114–117, 121–2, 130, 135–6, 139–40, 150–1, 159–60, 193–9, 201–3
  pilot program 207–208
educational choice 69–70, 229–30
educational control 67–72
educational finance 265
efficiency 64, 69–70, 95, 106, 131, 166, 173, 230, 238, 244, 246–7, 260
  definition 85
  see school efficiency
electorate 259
entrepreneurs 265
environment 56
equality of opportunity 69, 71, 96
  see equity
equipment 1, 39, 135–6, 138, 146–7, 152–4, 182, 184, 188, 190–1, 208, 234
equity 62–3, 66, 70, 86, 106, 167, 173, 186–7, 205, 243, 246, 260, 265
  see equality of opportunity
Etzioni, A. 35
evaluation 51, 82, 94
  see accountability
  see surveys

facilitators to change 19
family 64–5

family power equalizing 65
Fesler, J. W. 61
fidelity of change 205
Firestone see Herriott
five-tiered model of decentralization 100–102
  see conceptual synthesis
flexibility 1, 20, 40–42, 44, 62–3, 101–2, 166, 173, 227, 260–6
  achievement of 157
  anticipated 11–12
  constraints on 93, 104, 133, 137–9, 149, 237, 259
  definition 40
  in education 73–76
  of school-based management 92–3, 104, 144–58, 234–7
  paradox of 40–41
  problem 3, 8
  see precis on
  see reflections on
Florida Commission 95–8, 247, 252
form of school–based management 103, 129
  see organizational decentralization
  see political decentralization
  see administrative decentralization
Fort Nelson 115–6, 118, 121–2, 141
Fort St. John 116, 118
freedom 64, 69–70, 229–30, 265
Friedman, M. 63–6, 229–30
Friedman, R. 65
Fullan, M. 86

Gallup, G. H. surveys, Canada and U.S. 197–9, 244
garbage can model 52–3, 227
Garms, W. I. 4, 6, 8, 69, 70–2, 86, 91, 129, 231, 246, 248
General Motors 32, 45
goal displacement 67–8, 241
goal measurement 30–31, 43
  see surveys
goal optimization 43
goals 53, 80, 82–3, 85, 103, 106, 132, 142, 161, 169, 173, 177, 205, 221, 225, 240
  of education 61
  of schools 52, 65, 66, 67
  measurement of 80, 192–9, 224
Goodlad, J. I. 8, 73–75, 132, 172, 236–7
Gorden, R. L. 120
grade–based budgeting 264
Greenhalgh, J. 89–90, 92–4, 97, 231–3, 237, 242
Guba, E. G. 111
Guthrie, J. W. 91
  see Garms

Haider, D. 61
Hanushek, E. A. 83
Hatlevik, E. A. 10, 14, 16–18
Hentschke, G. C. 68
Herriott, R. E. 112
hoarding of supplies 105, 190, 243
  see supplies
horizontal decentralization 38, 39, 40, 41, 103, 226, 258
hourglass metaphor 112–4
Huberman see Miles
human relations framework 54

ideological position 66
implementation 89, 97–8, 106, 117, 166
  defined 87
  district-wide 210
  inhibitors 210
incentive to innovate 156
individualism 65, 66
industrial giants 45–46
information 203
  for schools 206
initiative 12, 73, 104, 154–6, 235, 259
innovation 29, 30, 41, 62, 73, 75–6, 87–8, 104, 106, 154–6, 235–6, 259
inputs 45, 80–1, 106, 180–7
inservice training 205, 49
instrumentality 54, 228, 258
interview strategy 120–121
interview tactics 121–122
interviews 256
involuntary adoption
  see legislative mandate to decentralize

Jay, T. 32
job security 175–6, 240

Kellett, R. P. 136–7, 188–9
key personnel in change 247, 252
key questions about school-based management 102–107
key roles in adoption 201–204
  see key personnel in change
  see single person's role in change
knowledge 44, 62–3, 95, 103, 132, 150, 221, 229, 258
  condition of 33–35
  locus of 33–4, 224–5
  specialized 34
Kochen, M. 31, 35–7, 40–1, 44, 131–2, 145, 225–6, 236–7, 245
Kogan, M. 76–9, 241–2
Kowalski, T. J. 20–1

lack of meaningful involvement 167, 173
Langley 115–117, 121–2, 130, 141, 161, 193
  pilot program 208–9
LaNoue, G. R. 61
large districts 10, 254
large schools 10, 141
Laugo, J. 61
leader-technician issue 191–192
leadership 16–7, 82, 97, 152, 156, 191, 202, 204, 228, 244, 248, 255, 260
learning outcomes 82, 192–3, 243, 264–5
legislative mandate to decentralize 9, 18, 97, 99, 253, 266
legitimacy 35
Levin, H. 65–6, 81, 230
liberal democratic model 78–9, 241
liberalism 65
liberty 70
Liethwood, K. A. 7
lieutenants 204, 252
limitations of study 256–7
Lincoln see Guba
Lindelow, J. 89, 94, 231, 237, 242, 252
line and staff distinction 45–6
local control 61
loose coupling 50–3, 105, 227
Lotto see Clark
lump-sum allocation 70, 91, 138, 162, 231, 254
  see allocation mechanism

machine bureaucracy 27–28, 223
machine metaphor 56–8, 228
  see classical management theory
maintenance 2–3, 12, 136–8, 151
  see utilities
major themes of school-based management 102
  see structure, flexibility, accountability, productivity, change
management, idea of 79–80
managerial skills 18, 20, 98, 106, 254–5
managers, higher-level 34
managers, lower-level 34
mandate for education 61
Marburger, C. L. 90–1, 232–3
March, J. G. 52–3, 227–8, 263
market diversity 46–8, 251
markets 29–30, 45–6, 78
Marschak 93, 96–7, 237, 247
Maslechko, W. 136, 213
McLaughlin, M. 86–7
McLean see Laugo
Michaelson, J. B. 67–9, 71m 230
Miles, M. B. 86–8, 124–5, 251, 253
Mintzberg H. 33–6, 38–43, 45–9, 59, 85, 131–2, 166, 223–6, 233, 236, 241, 251–3
mission 47
  see goals
money follows the child 140, 222
Montgomery see Liethwood
Morgan, G. 55–7, 59, 132–3, 228–9
Mosychuk see Palmer
motivation 41
multi-site studies 112
multiple bosses 57
  see one-boss rule
  see chain of command

National Aeronautics and Space Administration 26
National Film Board of Canada 26

naturalistic inquiry 112
naturalistic paradigm 111
Nelson 118, 121
non-parents 197
non-rational perspective 100–1

Ohio 116, 119
old boys' club 7
Olsen see March
one boss rule 56–7, 105, 133, 164
  see chain of command
opposition to decentralization 19, 106, 212–5, 249, 252, 254, 261
  from senior governments 212
  from school board members 212, 249
  from central office staff 213, 250
  from principals 213, 250
  from teachers' associations 213–4, 250
  from support staff unions 214, 250
  from parents 214, 250
organism, metaphor of 56–8
organizational age 47
organizational cultures 53–5, 228
organizational decentralization 40–5, 60, 62, 100–1, 103, 221, 258, 262
  see administrative decentralization
  see political decentralization
organizational environment 53
organizational goals 42–3
organizational images or metaphors 55–8, 228
organizational rationality 226–229
organizational size 47
  see small districts, large districts
  see small schools, large schools
organizational structure 25–31, 263
  see structure
  see precis on
  see reflections on
other data sources 122–3
outcomes 44, 85
output indicators 192–199, 265
outputs 30, 45, 62, 80–1, 106, 260
Ozembloski, L. 86, 200

Palmer, R. 178–9, 193–7
parallel decentralization 40, 226, 258
parent council 70–1, 91, 94, 134, 230–2, 240, 259
parent role changes 176–7
parental choice 66
parental competence 11
parental control, see parent council
parental freedom 63–66
parental involvement 177
parental participation 8, 10, 78, 90–1, 96, 98, 105, 193–9
  see surveys
Parry, A. 202
Parslow, C. 186
Parsons, 211
participation in decision making 167, 263
  see staff participation
participatory democratic model 78–9, 241
particular decisions made under decentralization 146–150
Peace River North 115–6, 118, 121–2, 136–7, 161
Peace River South 118, 121
perception, problem of 256
performance control system 43, 105, 177–9
personnel 2, 30, 39, 58, 70, 89, 98, 135–9, 147–50, 152, 190–1, 231, 235
  see staff personnel
Pierce see Garms
pilot programs 97, 206–12, 249, 252, 261
  see respective districts
pilot programs, post-pilot period 211–2
planning 83, 103–4, 131–2, 134, 142–3, 173, 176, 204, 209, 241, 254
  school planning 8, 75, 94
  see budgeting
pluralism 79
policy 238
political and economic decentralization 229–231
political decentralization 74, 91–2, 94, 100–1, 103, 221, 232, 254, 258, 262
  definition 229
  see organizational decentralization

political framework 54
post-pilot period of implementation 211–2
power 33, 35, 38–9, 47, 91
  see authority
precis on accountability 238–40
precis on change to school-based management 248
precis on flexibility 234–7
precis on productivity 242–4
precis on structure 211–3
preparation for change 18, 97, 106, 204–6, 248, 253–4, 261
President's Commission on School Finance see Florida Commission
primary districts with school-based management 114–117, 122
principal, reactions to decentralization 166–7
principal, role change 105, 166–172, 259, 260, 265
principal, decision making 13–14
principal, role statement of 13, 211
private sector 42, 203
processes linking inputs to outputs 187–192
processes of school-based management 103, 139–143
  see also budgetary review and control
  see also resource allocation
production functions 80–81, 245, 260
productivity 44–45, 52, 101–2, 261, 263, 265–6
  anticipated 15–17
  definition 80
  in education 79–86
  of school-based management 95–97, 105–6, 180–99
  see precis on
  see reflections on
professional accountability 77
professional bureaucracy 28, 223–4, 264
professional development 147–8, 188
project supervision 123–124
public choice theory 67–70, 230
public control 77
punishment 155, 168, 178
Purkey, S. C. 75–6, 236
purposive sampling 257

qualitative research 111
questionable practices 8

rational choice 227
rational model 50, 53, 55
rationality 50–3, 68, 105, 258
recentralization 48–9, 60, 97, 106, 251, 261, 266
reflections on accountability 240–2
reflections on change to school-based management 250
reflections on flexibility 235–7
reflections on productivity 244–7
reflections on structure 223–232
regional diversification 47
resource allocation 17, 27, 69, 86, 90, 98, 106, 139–142, 187, 205, 222, 230, 232, 239, 246
  formulas 139–40
  see allocation
  see lump sum allocation
resources 3, 16, 82–3, 245, 259, 264, 265
resources for innovation 88
resources matched to specific tasks 189, 243, 247, 254
responsibility 5, 8, 34, 41, 46, 57–8, 64, 130, 132, 167–8
  definition 77
  and authority and responsibility
responsiveness 41, 51, 70, 73, 94, 104, 131–2, 145, 225, 234, 236, 259
retreats 206
retrenchment 33, 41, 156, 165, 167, 181–2, 231, 235, 240, 250, 252, 261
  and change to school-based management 215–7
rewards 155–6
role changes 105, 238–40
  anticipated 12–5
  board members 238
  central office staff 238
  principals 238–9
  teachers 239

support staff 239–40
parents 240
role changes under decentralization 162–177
role descriptions 53, 204, 227
roles in change process 106, 247–8
see key roles in adoption
see secondary roles in change
Roman Empire 31–2
Roth, G. 182, 210
rules, making of 27, 31, 163–4, 223
rural districts' pilot programs 209–210

sample districts 114–120
satisfaction 174, 240–2, 244, 260
parent and staff 193–5
see also surveys
school board 12, 63, 67, 74, 94, 78, 105, 160, 208, 259
school board members 265
school board role change 162–164
school business officer 203
school effectiveness 74–6, 81–4, 94, 106, 132, 245–6, 260
school efficiency 84–86
see efficiency
school improvement 73–6, 87, 236
school outcomes see learning outcomes
school pairing 211
school renewal 75
school site management 70–72
see Garms
school size 10, 213
see also small schools, large schools
school-based management, defined vii, 9, 130
school-site budgeting 231
see Greenhalgh
Schultz, R. W. 85, 246
Schumacher, E. F. 41–2, 224, 236–7
scientific management 84
scientific paradigm 111
scope of decision-making 11, 39, 90, 92, 99, 103, 135–9, 145–6, 222, 232, 254, 258–9, 264
see selective decentralization
Sears, Roebuck and Company 45
secondary districts with school-based management 118–119
secondary roles in change 204, 261
secretary-treasurer 203
segregation 230
selective decentralization 40, 41, 226, 258
self-interest 68
Seward, N. J. 95–6, 247
sick leave 135
Simon, H. A. 32–4, 44, 224, 245
simple structure 26, 223
single person's role in change 247
small districts 98, 106, 141, 222, 252, 261
small schools 140–1, 160, 222
Smith, B. L. R. see LaNoue
Smith, M. S. see Purkey
Snyder, K. J. 79–80
Sommerville, N. 141
sources on school-based management 88–99
span of control 56–7, 164
special education 151
specialization 57–8
see division of labour
Spencer, B. D. 83
Spinks see Caldwell
squeaky wheel budgeting 141, 187, 243
staff involvement 167–75
see staff participation in decision-making
staff participation in decision-making 14, 168–73, 239, 241, 254
staff personnel 56–7
staffing 8
Standard Oil of New Jersey 45
Stevens, M. 136, 161, 169, 176–7, 181, 206, 209, 216
strategy 46
Strembitsky, M. 130–1, 135, 140, 147, 151, 163, 166, 180, 182, 202–3, 207–8, 211, 248
stress factor 167, 173, 184, 239, 243
structural-functionalism 54–5, 100–1, 229, 258, 262
structure 261, 266

anticipated 8–11
defined 25
see organizational structure
see precis on
see reflections on
structure follows strategy 250
structure of school-based management 89–92, 102–3, 129–43
structure of school-based management as reported 231–2
student access to resources 186–7
see equality of opportunity
see equity
student-based management 264
subsidiarity, principle of 32, 64, 166, 173, 239
Sugarman see Coons
superintendent 13, 38, 74, 91, 98, 105, 120
supervisor 58
supplies 39, 95, 135–8, 146–7, 234
support for decentralization 20, 252–4
support staff 2, 105, 260
support staff role changes 175–177
surplus, budget 7, 16, 142, 160–1, 168, 171, 181–2, 189, 243
surveys, parent, student, and staff 178–9, 193–9, 240, 244, 246, 259
Sweeny, J. 82
symbolic framework 54–5

Tamblyn, R. 6
Taylor D. 142, 168, 200–1, 204–5, 215–6
Taylor, F. 84
teacher participation 14–15
see staff participation
see staff involvement
teacher role changes under decentralization 172–175
teacher supervision 264–5
teacher-based management 264
teachers 2, 105, 260
see staff
technical efficiency 67–9, 247, 260
technician 16, 106, 191, 244, 254–5, 260
see leader-technician issue
see leadership
technology 53–4, 96–7, 105, 183, 185–6, 192, 243, 247, 260
telephones 190
Thomas, J. A. 85, 131, 246
Thomason see Marschak
time demands 173
see workload
tradeoff, personnel and equipment 189, 234
traditional organizational theory 50–1, 53–5
see structural-functionalism
tri-phasic theory of planned change 87–88, 200, 251
trust 10, 33, 68, 170, 203, 225, 230, 258

union contracts 98–99, 175
United States vii, 233, 247, 256
user pay 155, 165, 238
see central office consultants
utilities 135, 138, 150, 235
see maintenance

vertical decentralization 38, 40–41, 103, 226, 258
vision 154, 202, 204
voluntary adoption 247, 261
voucher plans 63–6, 71, 229–30

Webster, N. 40
Weick, K. 50–1, 53, 227
Wiley see Spencer
working model of decentralization 206, 249, 261
workload, staff 17, 96–7, 105, 167, 176, 183–5, 239, 243, 245, 254, 260

Young, J. H. 123, 182

Dan Brown obtained his PhD at the Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago. After six years at the State University of New York at Buffalo, he moved to the University of British Columbia in Vancouver where he currently teaches in the educational administration program. The author of numerous articles in academic and professional journals, his chief interests lie in educational finance, particularly in school-based management and the ways in which schools acquire private resources.

Books from Falmer Press

London, New York and Philadelphia

THE SELF-MANAGING SCHOOL
Brian J. Caldwell and Jim M. Spinks

THE POLITICS OF REFORMING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
Edited by Jane Hannaway and Robert Crowson

LOCAL REALITIES, LOCAL ADAPTATIONS
Problem, Process and Person in a School's Governance
Frederick F. Lighthall with Susan D. Allan

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
Edited by John Smyth

MAKING THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY
Belief, Practice and Theory in School Administration
Mark Holmes and Edward A. Wynne

SCHOOLS AS COLLABORATIVE CULTURES:
Creating the Future Now
Edited by Ann Lieberman

BETTER SCHOOLS
A Values Perspective
Clive Beck

PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC POLICY
International Perspectives
Edited by William Lowe Boyd and James G. Cibulka